



13th March, 2005

Ballineaspais Bulletin

Fifth Sunday of Lent

No. 832



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
DENNEHY'S CROSS, CORK



FROM OUR
**PARISH
TEAM**

Fr. Declan writes

Writer's Cramp?

I've been staring at a blank computer screen for half an hour, trying to write this. I've prayed to the Holy Spirit for inspiration, but She seems to be offline. Writer's cramp? Not really. Spiritual dryness? Not really. It's just very difficult to compose something short and inspirational. I suppose that's why so many sermons are too long. The shorter a message is, they say, the more time needs to go into preparing it.

I remember though, hearing a story during a Retreat many years ago about a newly-ordained priest who was academically brilliant, and who had a string of degrees after his name. A week or two after his Ordination, he visited a convent of enclosed Sisters. The Superior said to him, 'Before you go, Father, maybe you would say a few words to the sisters.... Just a short little message of inspiration and a blessing?' 'Oh no! I couldn't possibly,' was the reply, 'I.....I've nothing prepared. I'd have to be ready - maybe some other time.' 'Surely, Father, you could speak to us for a moment or two about the love of God,' the Superior said gently. The priest went home a little sad, knowing

his degrees were of little importance. The sisters were a little sad too.

That story comes to me any time I struggle for a simple message. The whole of Christian Spirituality is about the experience of knowing you are loved by God. The Gospel is all about this message of Jesus. The Mass and other liturgies are all a celebration of it. Our lives are all about our response to it. In two weeks' time, we can see how passionate Jesus felt about God's love -- prepared to die for it. How complicated our faith seems sometimes, with all the 'trimmings'. But how incredibly simple it is really, stripped to its essentials. Maybe some have got lost in the 'trimmings', and forgotten the essentials!!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY MASS TIMES

Wed. 16th: Vigil Mass at 7.30 p.m.

Thurs. 17th: 9.00, 10.30 (Gaeilge),
12.15 p.m.

No evening Mass on St. Patrick's Day

Please take a copy of the
Bulletin home
or give it to a friend or neighbour

Rest In Peace

Margaret Barrett, Parkway Drive, Model Farm Road, died quite unexpectedly and at a comparatively young age on Sunday 20th February. Herself and her husband Tom had just returned from Mass when she felt unwell, and passed away more or less there and then. Margaret was a native of Douglas Street, but had lived in our parish for over twenty years – as indeed did two of her sisters, Bernadette Mealy and Rose Mullins. We extend very sincere sympathy to her husband Tom, her son Edward, daughter Pamela, her mother, sisters, brother, daughter-in-law, grandchildren and extended family.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was concerned last weekend when we were asked to pray for people suffering from disabilities. Having worked in the disability field for many years I am acutely aware that a lot of people with disabilities would neither regard themselves as ill or suffering. In fact, many are capable of living happy, healthy and productive lives. Perhaps we should have prayed that, like Jesus in the Gospel, we learn to recognise and welcome the valuable contribution that people with disabilities can make to our society.

Regards,

Aoife O'Sullivan, via e-mail

Fr. Declan replies:

The gospel was a story of how Jesus restored not only the blind man's sight but also his dignity, confidence and self respect. My prayer was, "We are

conscious today of the visually impaired and of others who suffer from disabilities of any kind, that they may see themselves as having dignity, value and self respect." This prayer, I'm sure, will be relevant to many people and should give no offence to those who do not see their disability as a suffering or illness.

CHANGE THE WORLD FROM YOUR ARMCHAIR

Lent and Fairtrade Fortnight (1-13 March) coincide this year. The focus of the 2005 Trócaire Lenten campaign is Ethiopia. It is Africa's leading producer and exporter of Arabica, the finest type of coffee bean in the world.

BUT the price paid for coffee in 2005 is at a 30-year low. The coffee crisis is affecting 25 million producers in large parts of Africa, including Ethiopia, Asia and Latin America, threatening the livelihoods of 200 million people. Ten years ago, developing countries received an export income of 30 cents for every \$1 spent on a retail cup of coffee. Today, they get less than ten cents. As a result coffee farmers are facing ruin.

Tadesse Meskela, who leads a Fairtrade coffee co-operative in Ethiopia, explains the importance of supporting Fairtrade products: "We are able to build new homes and keep our children in school. Our members don't suffer from malnutrition like other coffee growers do."

By changing your brand of coffee this Lent, you can transform lives on the other side of the world.



"Just Lent" 4

Justice and Aid for Third World

Irish people are more than willing to respond to those in dire need, as they have done following the recent tsunami disaster. An Taoiseach, in an address to the UN, committed, on our behalf, that Ireland would fully meet the UN target of Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2007. **So is it right that members of our Government are pulling back from our commitment on development aid to the poorest Third World countries?**

Mike Fitzgibbon, Centre for Sustainable Livelihoods, UCC, gave us seven reasons why he believes we should meet the UN target. Mike has experienced at first hand the tragedies of poverty in Tanzania, where he worked as volunteer for four years, and he spoke with feeling and conviction.

The ODA target of 0.7% GDP is currently equivalent to approximately €950 million. It may sound a lot, but we can afford it. To put it in context, a single Irish bank recently announced profits of one and a half times that amount.

We also understand the importance of development aid, since the main reason that Ireland is so prosperous now, is because of the development aid which we, as members of the EU, received from our EU partners.

Many of our EU trade arrangements, such as CAP, have blocked Third World farmers from trading with Europe, and have also disadvantaged their local trade. Economic Partnership Agreements, currently being negotiated, further threaten Third World trade.

We made a commitment. We have never been so well off. Are we now going to break our promise?

Bible Corner



SIGNS AND FAITH

This weekend's gospel is the climax of seven miracle stories or signs that John's gospel records for us. Unlike the other gospel writers who recounted numerous miracles just as they happened, John selected just seven key ones. Then, around each one of them he gathered a core teaching of Jesus, usually in the form of a dialogue. This weekend, our miracle is the restoring of Lazarus to life, and the message is about the resurrection of Jesus and about our own resurrection. This is the hub of our religion.

In each of the stories, John highlights that miracles on their own never converted anybody. Those who wish to remain unconvinced, do so. For instance, last weekend it did not suit the Pharisees to believe that a blind man had had his sight restored, so they claimed he have never been blind. For miracles to produce conversion, faith is also required. The woman at the well, the blind man and Martha, each proclaims their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and so was open to receive the fullness of eternal life. We, too, believe; Lord strengthen our faith.



LAZARUS COME
OUT OF THE GRAVE



NOTICE BOARD

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

NEXT SUNDAY

MARCH 20TH

5.00 P.M.

Bulletins to the Homes

Next weekend bulletins will be delivered to all homes in the parish.

Pastoral Council

Monthly meeting will take place on Monday 14th at 8.10 p.m. in the Parish Centre.

God's Word

Readings for Sunday 20th March

First Reading:

Is. 50:4-7. The prophet Isaiah gives us a picture of a suffering Messiah, one who will be a true servant of God.

Psalm : 22

Second Reading:

Phil. 2:6-11. St. Paul cites a very old hymn, which tells of the degradation and exaltation of Jesus.

Gospel:

Mt. 26:14-27. We listen to Matthew's account of the Passion.

EMERGENCY NUMBER

087 - 251 9940

St. Patrick's Day

Lá 'le Pádraig

On St. Patrick's Day, the 10.30 a.m. Mass will be celebrated in Irish. English leaflets as well as the Irish text of the Mass will be available.

Ceiliúrfar Aifreann maidne 10.30 ar Lá 'le Pádraig as Gaeilge. Beidh bílleoga ar fáil sa dá theanga.



**REMEMBERING ON
ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

The feast of our National Patron allows us to reflect on our deep heritage. We have been formed by Patrick's example and vision. His focus on the person of Christ leads us to the heart of our faith.

On his feast we acknowledge all those who are a part of our nation. 1.2 million Irish-born people live abroad. The SIA - Supporting Irish Abroad Campaign - supported by the Irish Bishops' Conference through the Commission for Emigrants asks us to remember our people across the world.

We recall also that St. Patrick was an immigrant. We acknowledge the blessings he brought to our land and we celebrate the gifts of many who now journey to Ireland.