

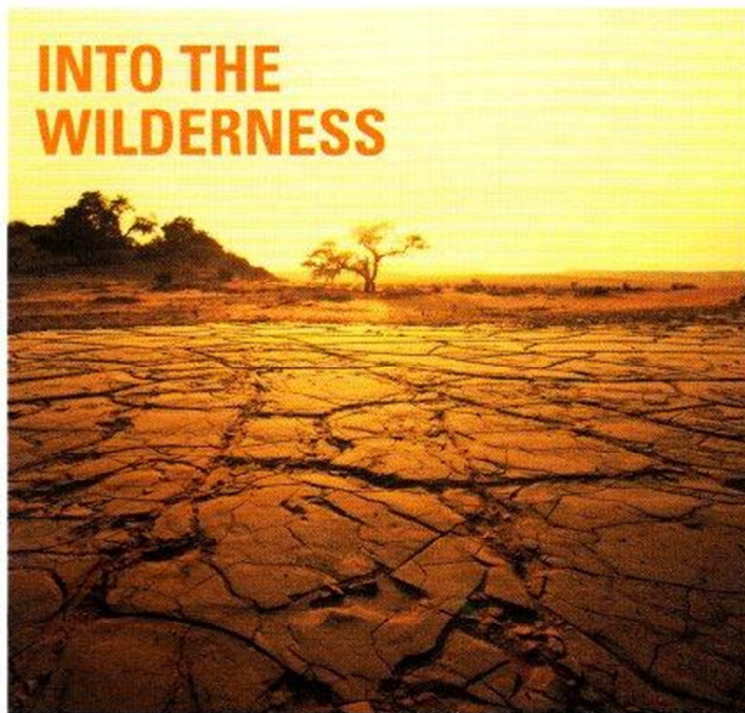
18 FEBRUARY 2018

# Sunday Message

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year B • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter week 1



## INTO THE WILDERNESS

Jesus has just been baptised. The voice from heaven has proclaimed: *You are my beloved son; in you I am well pleased. But how does Jesus understand this? What does it mean to be the Son of God?*

Mark tells us that Jesus was put to the test, but does not give us any details about how this might have happened. It is worth noting that this event was no accident: it is *the Spirit* who is responsible for this experience and who *drives Jesus out* to face it. It is God who is putting Jesus to the test.

In a way, this is also the experience of the disciples of Jesus. They have already taken his message to heart: they have changed their attitudes (repented) and accepted the Good News. They have publicly declared this inner change by being baptised, and through this ritual have been adopted as God's beloved children. But this will not spare them being tested or undergoing trials, any more than it did Jesus. Mark often links the Gospel with the person of Jesus: Jesus embodies the message. His experience of the power of God in suffering and rejection through to the resurrection is the way presented to the disciple, then and now. The desert or wilderness may well be the place where the person is tested and fails, as in the story of Israel on the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, but it's also the place where the damaged relationship can be restored: it represents also a time of special closeness and intimacy between the Lord and the people of Israel. ■

### DO

Choose something to do for Lent which will help to remind you daily of God's love for you: How you can better return that love in your personal relationship with the Lord?

### SAY

**The time has come: the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

### REFLECT

The Gospels do not simply tell the story of Jesus: they mirror also the experience of the community from which they emerge. An important theme in the First Gospel, the gospel of Mark, is that of *discipleship*, what it means to be a follower of Jesus. In our reading today, which sets the scene for our liturgical season of Lent, we are told that baptism may be the end of the initial period of conversion, but it is also the beginning of a lifetime commitment, and that the newly-baptised person should expect to be put to the test in one way or another. In the Gospel tradition, Jesus has to face up to what it means to be the Son of God, and the struggle will be repeated at Gethsemane when the final test, the Passion, is about to begin.

At the beginning of Lent, we are invited to take up some practice of penance. For many of us, this is the firing-gun for a marathon ordeal, at the end of which we will feel pleased with ourselves for keeping our resolutions or a failure for not having done so. But that is not the point. The purpose of fasting is to heighten our spiritual awareness: the less the body has to do, the more the mind or spirit can function. This can be a rather uncomfortable experience: we are brought face to face with ourselves and what we are really like. But the purpose of Lent is to bring us closer to God, so that we may become more *his beloved children*. Then Easter will truly be a time of rebirth, a real cause for celebration. ■

### LEARN

The term the *temptations of Jesus* is better understood as Jesus being tested.

The mention of *wilderness and forty* is meant to remind us of Israel in the desert: Israel was put to the test and failed.

*Wild beasts* are associated in the bible with evil powers.

Angels also minister to Elijah in the wilderness at Mount Horeb (Sinai).

**SWINFORD MEELICK MIDFIELD**  
**Fr Dermot Meehan Phone: 094-9251790/Urgent Calls: 087-1338200**

**PARISH OFFICE- OPENING HOURS: Mon, Thurs, Fri: 9.30am-2.30pm; Tues: 9.30am-1p.m;**  
**Phone: 094 - 9253607**  
**Email: swinews@hotmail.com** **18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Betty Casserly, Kilkelly Road Annie & Patrick O'Neill & dec'd Family, Tullinacurra & John Durkan & dec'd Family, Culmore
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>12 noon</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Bernard & Evelyn McDonnell, Curryane & Patrick & Margaret McLoughlin & Bill & Teresa Reid Úna & Denis Deacy, Ashgrove & Úna's parents John & Winnifred Doyle
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> James Reddington, Ballina Road Kevin Nestor, Market St
<b>Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> James & Margaret Dowling & Mary Rowley
<b>Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> No Intention
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Thomas James Callahan, Philadelphia/Swinford
<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Human Life International Ireland Anthony & Ellen Gavin & son Brian & grandson John, Newpark
<b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Michael Jordan, Lislackagh (MM)

**SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT**

<b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> Michael & Tim Kilroe & de'd Kilroe & Whelan Families, Market Street Michael & Bridget Muldowney, Cashelsheenaughane
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>12 noon</b>	<b>Swinford:</b> John & Margaret Brennan, Carracanada Mary & Martin Foote & son Peter & daughter Marian, Tullinacurra

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<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Meelick:</b> Patrick Durkan, Clooninshin/Templogue (1 <sup>st</sup> anniv) Michael & Mary Durkan, Culleens
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Meelick:</b> Margaret & Tom Walsh & sons Bartley & Pat & dec'd Family, Laughtadurkin John & Mary Browne & son Anthony, Collagh

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<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Midfield:</b> Teresa & Ned Rice & dec'd Family Paddy & Teresa Brennan & dec'd Brennan & Mulligan Families
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Midfield:</b> Joe Morley & parents Julia & William & dec'd Family, Faheens Madeleine Forkan, Chapel Street

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**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**

**Swinford Church:** Sundays: 2pm-6pm & Thursdays 10.30am-8pm

**Midfield Church:** Mondays 11am-12noon

**Meelick Church:** Mondays 7pm-9pm

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**Please pray for** Billy Kilgallon, Lisheenabrone; Michael Durkin, Culmore; Tom Thompson, Cullonaughton (brother of Joe Thompson, Meelick) and Anne Diamond (sister of Mary Gallagher, Cloongullane). May they rest in the peace of Christ.

**We welcome into the Christian community**

Killian Kemski, Castlebar and Kinaffe who was baptised recently in Swinford Church.

**A note from Fr Dermot:** On Sunday last, Bishop Brendan Kelly was installed as Bishop of Galway during Mass in Galway Cathedral. His appointment means that our diocese of Achonry now has no bishop until a new bishop is appointed by the Pope. In the meantime, the day-to-day running of the diocese falls to the Diocesan Administrator. On Monday morning last, I was elected to and accepted that role. I will continue to serve as parish priest here in Swinford and will take on the added responsibilities of the Diocesan Administrator. I am only too aware of my limitations and inadequacies, so I earnestly ask you to pray for me at this time. With God's help and the prayers and support of the people and priests of the diocese, I will do my best to carry out my duties in the parish and the diocese. As Diocesan Administrator I will have to be absent from the parish from time to time – for example, to attend meetings of the Irish Bishops' Conference in Maynooth. During those times I will need to call on priests from neighbouring parishes to look after some of my duties here in Swinford. This will include funerals. Balancing responsibilities as parish priest and diocesan administrator will be challenging and I ask your patience, understanding and co-operation but above all your prayers as I try to do so. Thank you.

**The Divine Mercy Chaplet** will be recited after 10 a.m. Mass each morning during Lent. Why not make this prayer part of your Lenten practice this year? Prayer cards with the Chaplet are available in all the churches this weekend. Please take one for praying the Chaplet after Mass or in your own home.

**Trócaire boxes** are available in all the churches this weekend. Lent encourages us to be grateful for all that God has given us and to be mindful of people in need. Contributing to

Trócaire is one way of helping people who are struggling simply to survive in our world.

**Achonry Diocese Lourdes Collection:** This special collection to help sick people from our diocese to go to Lourdes will be taken up this weekend. Please give as generously as you can. Boxes for contributions will be in all the churches. The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place this year from 2-7 September.

**WMOF2018:** Pope Francis personally chose Dublin to host the World Meeting of Families from 22-26 August 2018. Planning for this great national and international celebration of faith is at an advanced stage. WMOF promises to be an occasion that will reflect on the faith experience of families from many parts of the world as well as on the challenges and celebrations which characterise the ups and downs of day-to-day family life. Hosting this national and international event requires an enormous amount of planning and funding. In this regard the third national collection will be held next weekend, 24 and 25 February. Please give as generously as you can.

**GAA 50/50:** This week's draw was held in Bolands and Paddy Óg Smyth won €406. Next draw is in Melletts on 20th Feb.

**Culmore N.S.** will host an Open Day on Friday March 2<sup>nd</sup> between 2 and 4 p.m. All are welcome. Anyone wishing to enrol a child for September 2018, please come along on the day or alternatively enrolment forms are available from the school. Tel 9252038.

**Swinford Golf/Soccer Draw**, 10<sup>th</sup> February held in The Sheepwalk Bar: €1000 Swinford Credit Union; €300 David Benson, Manulla; €200 Frank Durkan, Gleann Daragh.

**Swinford Gardening Club:** Paula Cannon who works on the Edible Landscape Project on the Great Western Greenway will speak on her work in the Gateway Hotel on February 27<sup>th</sup> at 8 p.m. All welcome. Non-members €5.

**Swinford Community Results** 12<sup>th</sup> February: Winning numbers: 2, 18, 20, 25. €70 Local Shopping Voucher: Aisling Morley, Corrib Oil and Sympna Mulrooney, c/o Moores. 3 Number Cash Winners: John & Edo, c/o Melletts; Eurospar Syndicate; Hospice Shop; Tom Henry, c/o Melletts. Jackpot: €3,200.