

**Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020**  
**Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A Week 4)**

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**Malin Parish:** Resources, news and prayers: **Website:** [www.malinparish.ie](http://www.malinparish.ie). **Facebook:** Malin Parish

Details on the times of online **Masses and Prayers** for the Covid 19 Crisis : <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>  
**Mass Leaflets** for each Sunday are available in the churches and parish shops along with the weekly Bulletin.

**Sincere Thanks** to those who have sent in their collection envelopes, cheques and donations for the Parish during the past week. Please make cheques payable to “Malin Parochial”.

**Online Youth Programmes:** To access a wide variety of initiatives and activities by Derry Diocesan Youth, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DerryDiocesanYouth/> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/derryyouth/>

**Theology, Spirituality and Religious Experience:** The course consists of 10 one-hour online lectures by Fr. Pat Collins C.M. given over two weeks delivered entirely online. It is offered twice: 13 - 24 July or 10 - 21 Aug. Participants can interact on our e-learning platform and there will be a streamed question and answer session following the final lecture. <https://prioryinstitute.com/events/summer-school-2020-theology,-spirituality-and-religious-experience>

**Scripture Saturday with Bishop Donal:** Created by Derry Diocesan Youth, Bishop McKeown presents a series of short lessons on the Gospel in easy-to-understand, short (3-4 min) videos, with tips and references of where and how to use these lessons in your daily life. View the series at: [www.derrydiocese.org/scripture-saturday](http://www.derrydiocese.org/scripture-saturday)

**Reading for Mass: 1st Reading: Jeremiah 20:10-13**

Jeremiah is under stress from enemies, yet holds to his confidence in God

For I hear many whispering: “Terror is all around! Denounce him! Let us denounce him!” All my close friends are watching for me to stumble. “Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him.” But the Lord is with me like a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonour will never be forgotten. O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind; let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers. Reading – Jeremiah 20:10-13

10 Jeremiah said: “I hear the whisperings of many: ‘Terror on every side! Denounce! let us denounce him!’ All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine. ‘Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail, and take our vengeance on him.’”

**2nd Reading: Romans 5:12-15 The effects of Adam’s sin are cancelled by the death of Christ**

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned- sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man’s trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many.

**Gospel: Matthew 10:26-33 Jesus forewarns his disciples to be prepared for trials and suffering**

Jesus said to his disciples, “Have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.”

### **“Christian, but not offensively so”**

When Professor Mahaffey, a wit and scholar at Trinity College Dublin, was once asked if he was a Christian, he drawled, “Yes, but not offensively so.” Clearly he felt that Christianity should not intrude on the society he kept, nor put obstacles in the pursuit of any pleasure that attracted him. This could easily be a description of the Christianity of many of us here and now also. While we are quite prepared to admit that we are Christians, we are, by and large, careful not to take religion too seriously. I think it’s fair to say that rarely do we in any practical way so shape our lives according to our religious beliefs, that they offer any reprimand, however silent, to people who live by totally different standards.

A genuine Christian cannot fully escape Christ’s call to be different from the world. What he asks us is not to conform to the standards of this world, but rather to transform those standards. St Paul thought of Sin entering this world through one man, Adam, and through sin death, so that death has spread throughout the whole human race, because sin is so universal. The world’s greatest sin is unbelief, and the task of the Church is to challenge this unbelief, relying on the help of the Holy Spirit. The last words of Jesus, according to St Matthew, were, “Go and make disciples of people everywhere; baptise them and teach them to observe all that I taught you. And I am with you always, yes to the end of time.”

While we live in this world, we are meant to remain aware of the world to come, and live for God by pursuing the standards Jesus set for us. When the Apostles worried about the future, Christ encouraged them, “Don’t be afraid. I am with you always.” The deepest truth about God that Jesus taught is that he is a caring God, compassionate and forgiving, a God who is on our side. Our attitude to life can be that of the psalmist who says, “In God I trust – I shall not fear” (Ps 56:1). The only thing to fear is losing God, loss of trust in God. This lack of trust begins when I look for security through my own efforts, in the works and wealth of my own making. Jesus criticised the feverish efforts, the anxious haste and worry of those worldly people, who refuse to grant God any part in their lives. “In God I trust; I shall not fear.”

Jesus himself on the night of his last Passover, was about to suffer more than anyone had ever suffered, or ever will suffer in time to come. Yet, he remained affectionate and caring towards his friends and shared the meal with them, even the one who was plotting his betrayal. Later in Gethsemane when the terror of what lay ahead caused his sweat to fall like great drops of blood, his prayer was still, “Not my will but yours be done.” No matter how awful the future may seem, this should be our prayer and our spirit too.

### **A prophetic people**

Jeremiah laments his hardship as a prophet (first reading), and Jesus asks his followers to be brave in promoting their faith (Gospel). They imply that all members of the People of God are potentially prophetic and need to play their part in handing on the truth about God. In a sense, we are all successors to Jeremiah and to the apostles whose job it was to share Christ’s message with the world.

Not all Christians have equal opportunities of being spokespersons for God. Bishops and priests have the official duty of encouraging and teaching the faithful. Their difficult but worthwhile task is to faithfully hand on Christ’s teaching, and correct errors that threaten the integrity of the traditional Christian doctrine or ethical standards. Like Jeremiah and other Old Testament prophets, they remind their people of God’s revealed will and of the high moral standards God asks of us. And, like the prophets, priests can often expect criticism and opposition, just for doing their job.

Theologians too have an important work to fulfil in the Church, to deeply study the revealed truth, and then blend that traditional teaching with modern knowledge, so as to honestly apply the Christian message to new problems. To help them in this daunting work they have the light of the same Holy Spirit who guided the prophets of old, provided they do their research not as masters but as servants of the word of God. But it is not only priests and theologians who have the prophetic role towards God’s people. The Second Vatican Council taught that every Christian should give a living witness to Christ, at least through living a life of faith and charity and by joining in worship and prayer.

This is not such an easy matter. The spirit of today’s society, the example of our contemporaries, and the irreligious mood of much of the media do not always foster God-fearing attitudes or encourage sound moral standards. In most countries today, Christians are not persecuted for showing faith in Christ and his Gospel, but when she or he lives according to this teaching they will be swimming against the tide of a materialistic culture and will not find the going easy. Jesus warns that being a Christian will cost sacrifice and suffering. We are bound to face opposition from a world that does not gladly submit to the word of God, that makes so many demands on human nature. But there is real satisfaction, too, in standing up for the truth of things. In the centre of their souls, prophetic people have the happiness of working with the Lord, who is the ultimate truth on whom we all depend.