

Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 14th February 2021
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B Week 2)



Fr. Peter Devlin P.P.
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Mass Times
St. Patrick's Church – No Mass
Star of the Sea Church – No Mass
St. Mary's Church – No Mass

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Facebook: Malin Parish

Details on the times of online Masses and Prayers for the Covid 19 Crisis: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>

Ash Wednesday 17th February: Ashes will be available for parishioners in St Patrick's Aughaclay and Star of the Sea Churches on Ash Wednesday between 10am and 8pm. Parishioners can call into either church during this time to receive their ashes.

Please follow the instructions provided in each church to maintain the health and safety of all parishioners.

February: Parish Prayer Day for Marriage and Family Life: All Married Couples: On Saturday 20th of February we pray once again as a parish for twenty four hours. The Joy of Love (Pope Francis): As Christians, we can hardly stop advocating marriage simply to avoid countering contemporary sensibilities, or out of a desire to be fashionable, or a sense of helplessness in the face of human and moral failings. We would be depriving the world of values that we can and must offer. (No. 35) The safeguarding of the Lord's gift in the sacrament of matrimony is a concern not only of individual families but of the entire Christian community. (No.87)

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". New envelopes are available now January to June 2021 are now available in all churches and from Fr. Devlin. Please use these envelopes for your weekly contribution to the parish.

Parish Draw 2021-2022: Parish Draw Cards are now available from Fr. Devlin. Due to the risk to promoters and parishioners, the parish draw this year will not begin until April. Hopefully by then it will be safe for all. Promoters should make sure they now have their Draw cards and have plenty of time to contact draw members when it is safe to do so. The first draw will be in April and the parish draw will run from April to April in future years. Sincere thanks to our promoters and members of the draw. It is an important part of parish fundraising.

The Net – February 2021. Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese. With Covid-19 restrictions still in place, the February edition of 'The Net' will only be available on the Diocesan website -

<https://www.derrydiocese.org/news/the-net-february-2021>. However, the publication will be available again in parishes when the restrictions are lifted. Enquiries to – editorthenet15@gmail.com.

Knock Shrine: Exploring the Word of God through Prayer. A series of online Scripture Reflections at 9pm each Tuesday night. Knock Shrine will show a series of online night prayer with reflections on Scripture. Students from St. Louis Community School Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo will deliver this series of talks inspired by Scripture. You can join us online for this new series at www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live every Tuesday at 9pm. Knock Shrine are launching a new online series to engage you each Thursday at 8.30pm during Lent.

Accord Inishowen Counselling: A professional confidential counselling service is available for couples or individuals through Accord at the Pastoral Centre, Carndonagh. F93 XP59. Contact 074 93 74103, e-mail accordinishowen@gmail.com or book: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-and-relationship-counselling>.

Accord Inishowen will be hosting a **Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme** (Pre-Marriage Courses) via Zoom on Saturday 1st May 2021. To book online: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-preparation> or email: accordinishowen@gmail.com for more information.

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leviticus (13:1-2, 44-46) Lepers had to live apart. Only if a priest pronounced a leper cured could he or she come back into normal life

The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: "When a person has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns into a leprous disease on the skin of his body, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. he is leprous, he is unclean. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; the disease is on his head.

The person who has the leprous disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled; and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, "Unclean, unclean." He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."

Gospel: Mark 1:40-45 Jesus cures a leper by the healing touch of his hand

A leper came to Jesus begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

Healing the isolated

We all need to connect with others, to be in communion with them. We don't like to feel isolated or cut off from family, friends, or the wider community. One of the most challenging aspects of sickness or disability can be the isolation that it brings. When we are ill or our body grows weak we cannot take the same initiative we used to take to connect with others. People can become housebound because of their physical condition; the things they used to do to meet up with others are no longer possible. Certain forms of illness can be more isolating than others. The most isolating form of illness in the time of Jesus was leprosy. For hygienic reasons, lepers had to live apart, 'outside the camp', in the words of today's first reading. Lepers were only allowed to have each other for company. They lived apart from their family, their friends and the community to which they belonged.

The leper in today's gospel seemed determined to break out of his isolation. He did something that was unconventional and daring in approaching Jesus and pleading on with him, 'If you want to, you can cure me.' His desperation to be healed of an illness that kept him totally isolated drove him to do something that was against the Jewish Law at the time. In response to the leper's daring approach, Jesus did something just as unconventional. He reached out his hand and touched the leper. If it was forbidden for a leper to approach the healthy, it was certainly forbidden for a healthy person to touch a leper. It seems that the leper's desire to be freed from his isolation was met by an equally strong desire on the part of Jesus to deliver the leper from his isolation. The gospels portray Jesus as someone who worked to deliver people from their isolation, whether it is an isolation imposed by illness, as in the case of the leper, or by their lifestyle, as in the case of someone like Zacchaeus.

Both Jesus and of the leper have something to say to us about steps we can take to connect with people, to break out of our isolation, even when the odds seem to be stacked against us. We can all be tempted from time to time to retreat into our shell, whether it is because of our health or some disability or some past experience that has drained us of life. It is at such times that we need something of the initiative and daring energy of the leper. There can come a time when, like the leper, we need to take our courage in our own hands and, against the conventional expectation, to head out in some bold direction. It was desperation that drove the leper to seek out Jesus. Sometimes for us too, it can be our desperation that finally gets us going, gets us to connect with that person who matters to us and to whom we matter more than we realize or gets us to link up with some gathering or some group that has the potential to do us good or maybe even to transform our lives. Sometimes I can be amazed at the initiatives that some people take to connect with others, people who are much less healthier than I am and are much less physically able. I come across it all the time in the parish — older people who have mastered the internet and have come completely at home with Skype; younger people who in spite of some serious disability have found the means to live a very full life that is marked by the service of others. The man in today's gospel who approaches Jesus could well be the patron saint of all those who strive to connect with others against all the odds.

Unlike the leper, Jesus was perfectly healthy, but he had something of the same desire and energy to connect with others. When approached by the leper, he could have turned away, as most people would have done. Instead, Jesus stood his ground and engaged with the leper, reached out to him not only by word but by action. He not only spoke to him, but he touched him. Jesus often healed people by means of his word alone; but this man who had suffered from extreme isolation really needed to be touched. Jesus did more than was asked of him; he took an initiative as daring as the leper's move towards him. He went as far as any human being could go to deliver this man from his isolation. What the Lord did for the leper he wishes to continue doing through each one of us in our own day. There are many isolated and lonely people among us. The scope is there for all of us to take the kind of step that Jesus took towards the leper. Again, I can see examples of that in the parish all the time — people who look in on neighbours and make sure that they are all right and have what they need. There are always people among us waiting to be touched by our compassionate presence. When they are, they can experience the same kind of transformation as the leper did in today's gospel.