



Mass Times

Sundays: 9 am & 11 am
Saturday Vigil: 6.00 pm
Tuesday & Friday: 9.30 am
Fr. Michael Keohane Co-PP



Recently Deceased

Lillian Cox, Marian Park
 May the light of God surround her forever.



Our Lady of Lourdes, Pray for Us

This weekend we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and look forward to the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday during the coming week. The year is moving on quickly as Holy Week and Easter are celebrated at the end of March.



This weekend, the gospel begins by saying that a leper comes to Jesus and concludes by saying that 'people from all around would come to him'. In the first reading, the man suffering from leprosy is directed to approach the priest.

At one level, it is about the cure of an obvious and dreadful suffering. At a deeper level, it is the healing of his spirit, of his sense of who he is, of his sense of where he belongs in the company of Jesus, fundamentally that he is loved by God as who he is.

It is the fact that the leper has someone to turn to. He receives the most fundamental healing as a person and as a child of God. The leper is not turning to an organisation or a structure; he is turning to the person of Jesus Christ.

On the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and during the Season of Lent, may we turn to Jesus Christ through Mary.

Fr. Michael

Welcome to the First Holy Communion children and their families to the **Do This in Memory Mass** this weekend. May God bless the children, their families, their schools and our parish.

Trocaire Boxes are available in the church from this weekend. Please take one to your home and keep it prominent there during the coming weeks of Lent.



Ash Wednesday on 14th February, Mass @ 9.30am

Second collection w/e 10th/11th FEBRUARY for **DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES.**

Ballinlough, Blackrock, Blackrock Road, Mahon Family of Parishes Eilis Casey and Lorraine Buckley will speak at Masses in Blackrock and Mahon next weekend 17th & 18th February. They will speak at Masses in Ballinlough and Blackrock Road Parishes this weekend in relation to the formation of parish councils.

Finding hope in a hopeless world – Lent 2024: This is a seven-week programme for Parish groups or individuals which will be available on the Diocesan website (www.corkandross.org) from Ash Wednesday (February 14th). This programme explores how we can still be people of faith and hope in today's world. It includes a series of reflections, Scripture readings and prayers, and a guide on how to use this resource in your Parish/Family of Parishes.

Blackrock Community Association

The Annual General Meeting of Blackrock Community Association will take place at the Community Centre on MONDAY 12TH FEBRUARY at 12 NOON. All members are invited to attend.

A brief introduction on today's readings

First reading **Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-6**
 The gospel tells the story of the healing of a man with a skin complaint (not our "leprosy"). Such conditions were viewed very differently in ancient times, as we here in this reading from the book of Leviticus.

Second reading **Corinthians 10:31-11:1**
 Like our own times, early Christian communities experienced rivalry, based on different traditions and practices. Paul's advice is still good today: try to be helpful to everyone at all time.

Gospel **Mark 1:40-45**
 Jesus touches someone regarded as literally "untouchable", an outcast from society. Even today, the church tends to fall back into habits of exclusion, contrary to the teaching and practice of Jesus.

The Papers Say.....

Irish Catholic. (1) Fr. Vincent Sherlock: What do we think about the 'last priests in Ireland'? (2). Wendy Grace: A referendum that ignores the Trojan work of mothers. (3). David Quinn: How the Church can help fend off the far-right. (4). Brendan O'Regan: How the liberal media in Ireland work's its bias. -- 10 of the worst tactics. (5). The American author Flannery O'Connor ought to be on the faithful's radar, writes Russell Shaw.

Tablet. (1) Women deacons -- Recovering a lost treasure. (2). The Church and the Mafia -- Bowing to the bosses. (3) Race for the White House -- The rule of law goes on trial. (4). Letters Pages. -- Married priests: Let's just do it. (5). Rome -- Pope Francis and Archbishop Welby in joint service for Christian unity.

From Renaissance Florence to Michelangelo's Rome

A CULTURAL TOUR/PILGRIMAGE to ITALY
 With Group Leader Mícheál de Barra and Spiritual Director Fr. John Newman

Highlights of this tour, from 4th-13th September 2024, include visits to Venice, Padua, Ravenna, Bologna, Florence and of course Rome where we will experience a Papal Audience and visit to St. Peter's Basilica.

Fr. John will celebrate Mass for the group at various venues and shrines along the way.

For further information and Booking Form contact Mícheál at 0868337681 or email michealdebarra3@gmail.com

BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Church Gate collection last weekend came to €1680

Many thanks for your generous continued support.

Prayer for the Formation of a Parish Council

Heavenly Father, we come before you with grateful hearts as we embark on the journey of forming our parish Council. We seek your guidance, wisdom, and grace to build a vibrant parish council that reflects the love and teachings of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Lord, bless our efforts and help us to recognize the unique gifts and talents you have bestowed upon each of us. May we be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we discern the needs of our community and strive to fulfill your mission here on Earth.

We entrust the formation of our parish council to the intercession of Mary, our Mother, who stood by your Son in moments of joy and sorrow. May she guide us in imitating her example of faith, humility, and loving service.

We offer this prayer in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Observations

As it happens, leprosy in our sense did not exist in the ancient Near East. The traditional translation "leprosy" (often retained) refers to a variety of conditions, characterised by chronic discolouration of surfaces including human skin, fabrics and even the walls of houses.

The key is that these unusual conditions were regarded as making a person ritually unclean or impure; as a consequence, the person was excluded from community and worship until the condition had cleared and the cure had been certified. Viewed in terms of ritual impurity and social exclusion, the story has plenty of potential for today.

Jesus had no time for excluding people and no time for the ritual distinction clean/unclean or holy/unholy. More significantly, he broke these taboos because the God he proclaimed was the God of everyone without distinction. Simple as that and no one is excluded.

Reflections

1. Jesus' compassion for people's suffering was an outstanding characteristic of his ministry. We see the healing power of God at work through him. Recall times when the compassion of others has had a healing effect on you. Remember also when your compassion towards someone in trouble brought them hope, healing or strength.

2. "If you choose, you can make me clean". Our choice is a key factor in how we affect others. We cannot choose to have no impact on the people in our lives. Even a choice to do nothing has an effect. When have you been particularly aware of the importance of your choice to be a positive influence on another?

3. The leper was not just cured from a physical disease, he was also readmitted to contact with the community. Perhaps you recall people who were once ostracised being brought back into family or community. Who was the Jesus person who helped this healing to take place?

4. The joy of the leper on being healed was such that he could not keep the good news to himself. Bring to mind occasions when you were so filled with good news that you could not keep it to yourself.

PRAYER

We come before you, O God, confident in Christ's victory over sickness and death. Heal us again from sin, which divides us, and from prejudice, which isolates us. Bring us to wholeness of life through the pardon you grant your people. Amen.



Anam Cara West Cork the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding a Parent Evening on **Tuesday 20th February at 7:20pm in the Fernhill House Hotel, Clonakilty, P85 X322.** This is a free event and open to all bereaved parents. We also offer a free online monthly support meeting. For further information please contact us on 085 288 8888 or info@anamcara.ie



SVP St. Michael's Conference, Blackrock

Appeal for New Members

If you have 2 hours free on a Monday night, and would like to help those in need in our community, you can do so by Home Visitation with St. Vincent de Paul.

Thought for the day

To us, leprosy or any serious skin condition is a medical and perhaps a cosmetic issue. In Jesus' day, by contrast, such things entailed social exclusion and sufferer became literally untouchable. Hence the shock in the Gospel: he touched him. Before congratulating ourselves for not being so "primitive," it might not be any harm to ask who are the marginalised and excluded in our own time and culture? The categories are wide: socio-economic groups, ethnicity, orientation, religion. Are there people I never encounter?

Prayer

*Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found;
 Brought here together by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.
 No race or creed can love exclude, if honoured be God's name;
 our common life embraces all whose Father is the same.*

Taken from 'Where charity and love prevail'

K O'Mahony OSA

ENTRANCE - Be Still, for the Presence of the Lord

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here. Come, bow before him now, with reverence and fear. In him no sin is found. We stand on holy ground. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around; He burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned. How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light! Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place; He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace. No work too hard for him; in faith receive from him. Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

RECESSIONAL – How Great Thou Art

Oh Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds Thy hands have made I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.

*CHORUS: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee:
 How great Thou art, how great Thou art.
 Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee:
 How great Thou art, how great Thou art.*

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart; Then I shall bow, in humble adoration, And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art. *CHORUS: Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee etc.*

Confirmation 2024

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be celebrated on Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 10.30am.

First Holy Communion 2024

Saturday 27th April	Scoil Barra Naofa Buachaillí
Saturday 18th May	Scoil Barra Naofa Cailíní
Saturday 25th May	Scoil Ursula, St. Michael's, School of the Divine Child.

Vacancy – Parish Secretary

Mahon Parish is inviting applications for the role of Parish Secretary. This is a part-time role fulfilled within 12 – 15 hours per week. Please contact Fr. Michael Keohane Co-PP (085 8735905) or frmichael@corkandross.org for the role description details and information for applicants.

If you would like to receive a weekly commentary on the Weekly Scripture Readings, both in AUDIO, VIDEO and in PDF, please log on to www.tarsus.ie and register to receive the emails.
K O'Mahony OSA