

# Granaghan Parish Newsletter

Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday of the Word of God

**World Bible Day - 24th January 2021** - Pope Francis has called for 'World Bible Day' to be held on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time to raise awareness among Catholics about the need to read and reflect on the Bible all the year round. That can be done on your own or in small groups. For most Catholics, the only time they hear the Scriptures is when they attend Mass. (The attendance at Mass has been severely restricted for the past year because of Covid.) If enough Catholics in every Parish began to read and reflect on the Scriptures, on a regular basis, it could lead to the enrichment of our faith and the renewal of our Church. It might be the way to encourage our young people to engage with the rich Wisdom and Vision of the Jewish-Christian tradition in order to find meaning for their lives. In making his appeal to Catholics to read and reflect on the Word of God Pope Francis wants us all to make a real effort to enrich our lives and empower our communities keep through engaging with the Word of God on a daily and weekly basis. (PS There are many helpful reflections on the Scriptures on the internet.)

Often the Liturgy of the Word is so hurried that it has little impact. Hence, we need to read and reflect on the Word of God in the Scriptures during the week before and after.

It is the Bible that must shape how we think and act as followers of Christ. It is the Word of God that encourages us to live purposeful lives in community as people baptised in the Spirit and sent out to be witnesses to truth and justice in the world today. Pope Francis reminds us of our responsibility for the Earth and our calling to be people of peace and non-violence. When read from the point of view of the poor, the Scriptures are exciting, challenging and always interesting.

I would suggest that in returning to reading the Scriptures on our own or with others, we might begin with the New Testament and then dip in and out of the Old Testament -especially the Psalms and the Prophets. I suggest that we could begin by reading the Sermon on the Mount, then the Parables of Jesus. Then I suggest we read Jesus' conversations with so many different people. These stories and conversations are full of deep meaning for our lives. They will repay a close reading and time spent in reflection. The reading from Chapter 25 of Matthew's gospel - "I was hungry and you gave me food" is always challenging.

# GENERAL NOTICES

## **GRANAGHAN DISTRICT WOMAN'S GROUP**

Baby Massage and Yoga, Demo Cookery and Evening Crochet restarting Monday February 1st. Morning Yoga and Evening Pilates restarting Tuesday February 2nd, Morning Pilates and Daytime Meditation restarting Wednesday February 3rd, Evening Yoga and Vegetarian Cooking demo beginning Thursday February 4th. All above activities delivered via Facebook Live, Zoom or our FB Page. Why not visit our Facebook Page 'gdwg Swatragh' or our Instagram Account..... If you need help joining any of our activities just ring Ann on 028 7940 1396.

## **STEPPING STONES PRESCHOOL (130 Tirkane Road, Maghera)**

Online applications are now open to apply for your child's FREE Full-time Funded Preschool Place for September 2021. Check DE website: <http://www.eani.org.uk>

If you need any help or information please contact Ciara on Tel: 02879549482 / Mob: 07856396968 (Mon-Fri 8.30am – 1.30pm)

**(Pre-Pre School Places also available for children aged 2years and 10mths.)**

*The week ahead...*

**Responsorial Psalm:** Lord, make me know your ways.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia! Alleluia! The kingdom of God is close at hand; believe the Good News. Alleluia!

**Sunday 24th January.** Mark presents the Gospel of salvation within the context and plan of the life of Jesus. That life is the story of the suffering of the Messiah, now seen in the light of the Resurrection. We learn that the path to victory is by suffering discipleship. But the 'between times' are difficult and there is no other way. The call to follow Christ is the call to repent and believe.

**Monday 25th January. The Conversion of St Paul.** Paul's experience on the road to Damascus had a profound and lasting effect on him. From then until his death he was dominated by his devotion to the person of Christ. He preached the Gospel tirelessly, mainly in the non-Jewish world, building up Christian communities and bearing witness to his faith in Christ by his life and his work. Many of his letters have been preserved and form a substantial part of the New Testament. He died a

martyr's death in Rome about AD 65. The **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** concludes today.

**Tuesday 26th January. St Timothy and St Titus.** Younger followers of St Paul, they became his co-workers as missionaries. Both feature in the New Testament writings and both were leaders in early Christian communities.

**Wednesday 27th January. St Angela Merici,** founder of the Ursulines, devoted herself to Christian education based on love, kindness with firmness, and concern for the individual.

**Thursday 28th January. St Thomas Aquinas** (1224-1274) One of the greatest theologians, he is patron of schools, universities, students and booksellers.

**Saturday 30th January. St Aidan,** bishop (died in 626). A native of Cavan, Aidan studied under St David of Wales before returning to Ireland to set up a monastery at Ferns in Wexford.

**Pope Francis has asked us to celebrate a year in honour of St Joseph. There'll be more about this in later newsletters. This weekend we're printing the Prayer to St Joseph, Patron of the Church, Patron of Workers, Guardian of the Redeemer (titles given to St Joseph by Pope Pius IX, Pope Pius XII, Pope John Paul II respectively) and often invoked as Patron of a Happy Death.**

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK:** Today marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week 2021. During this week we aim to celebrate through prayer the unique contribution that Catholic schools, both primary and post-primary, make to supporting each other and living out Jesus' message of the gospel. This year's theme is 'Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith and Resilience'. This is especially important this year as school communities have been so affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Their faith and resilience is a great light in these challenging times. Resources for the week can be found on [www.catholicschools.ie](http://www.catholicschools.ie) .

### **A Prayer for Catholic Schools Week 2021**

Loving God,

Help our school communities to be places of hope, faith and resilience, especially in these days of challenge.

May we become more and more like your son Jesus who, by his words and actions, showed your unconditional love for all people.

May we learn to be like him, trusting in you and reaching out to those around us.

May your Holy Spirit be the source of inspiration and wisdom as we journey together in faith, hope and love.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The January edition of ***The Net*** is available to view on the Diocesan website and Facebook page.

**A prayer for Vocations:** For an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, and for a deeper gratitude for the priests and religious now serving the diocese and the Church.

We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.