

5th Sunday of Lent



FAITH IN FOCUS: BROKEN

People face brokenness on all sorts of levels. They feel devastated when their marriage breaks up. Children sense insecurity when they end up in a broken home. Death and separation, sickness and pain all make people realise that the wholeness they once experienced has been lost. For others it's about their children rejecting what they believe about God. Yet others feel broken when they are sacked, when their love life collapses or when something they long enjoyed is denied to them. It can be hard to face the future and we end up wondering why it is happening to us.

Today's gospel confronts these situations and tells us in Jesus's words that unless we are prepared to let go of some things we will never experience the true and deep joy of what life is all about. "Unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest."

All of us are broken in one way or another. Sometimes this brokenness is part of our basic personality and sometimes it's the result of external circumstances. Pretending that we are not broken does us no good, and it's the way we deal with our brokenness that produces something positive or just leaves us defective.

Brokenness can actually make us whole because it is an important ingredient in maturity. Realising our limitations enables us to rely not simply on our own strengths but on the power of God. Many people who go through traumatic experiences find they are now closer to God than they were previously.

St Paul speaks about being at his strongest when he recognises his weakness. This is because brokenness empowers; it is a process of surrender of mind and heart to God. It forces us to admit that any goodness or potential we might possess is really God's. And, perhaps more importantly, it allows us to identify with the rest of our fellow human beings. It lets us realise our lowliness in the face of God and it teaches us about our dependence, for we know that our greatest triumphs are really small when compared with what God can do.

The paradox is that in Jesus God allowed himself to be broken. By letting his Father use him on Calvary Christ was able to bring life to the world. We too, as grains of wheat, have to be prepared not to live out a pretence but to be broken so that our brokenness can germinate into a rich harvest for others. For our brokenness connects us to Christ. And Christ is God.

Unless
a grain of wheat
falls on the ground and dies,
it remains only a single grain;
but if it dies,
it yields a rich harvest.

John 12:24

The gospel story today involves Jesus reminding us that like the wheat grain we too have to die in order to live. There are circumstances in which we are asked to put ourselves in second place and see to the needs of others first. The gospel ends by Jesus once again saying how he will be 'lifted up' referring to the manner of his death.

As Lent draws to its closing stages we are reminded that we cannot fulfil God's purposes unless we confront the problem of suffering and self-denial in our lives. If we hope to sail through life without making any sacrifices for others then we are doomed. And unlike other philosophies that underline the skills and talents of their adherents, Jesus tells us that we achieve our dignity by putting ourselves last rather than first.



Next Sunday is

Palm Sunday

the beginning of

Holy Week

*Next weekend all our Masses will begin outside
to commemorate*

**The Lord's entry
into Jerusalem.**



*Hosanna!
Blessings on him
who comes in the
name of the Lord!*

Easter Triduum

Thursday 29th March Maundy Thursday 7pm

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

At St Patrick's Church

Friday 30th March

Good Friday 3pm:

Celebration of the Lord's Passion

At OLMC Church

Saturday 31st March 9pm

Easter Vigil

at OLMC Church



TRIDUUM

MASSES AND SERVICES

In Church this week

- Requiem Mass on Wednesday.

Sunday 18th March

5th SUNDAY of LENT

Sat 5pm	The Larkin Family	OLMC
Sun 9.45am	Rebecca Hammond	St Patrick
Sun 11.15am	Parishioners	OLMC

Mon 19th March

Feast of St Joseph

9am	John Toohey	OLMC
-----	-------------	------

Tue 20th March

7pm	Fr D McGrath	OLMC
-----	--------------	------

Wed 21st March

12noon	Requiem: Tommy Huyton	OLMC
--------	-----------------------	------

Thu 22nd March

10am	David Preston	St Patrick
------	---------------	------------

Fri 23rd March

7am	Charlotte Golling	OLMC
-----	-------------------	------

Sunday 25th March

PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY

Sat 5pm	Parishioners	OLMC
Sun 9.45am	Christopher Whittle	St Patrick
Sun 11.15am	Jimmy Brade	OLMC

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday 4-4.30pm

Evening Services - Stations of the Cross

7pm Wednesday St Patrick

7pm Thursday OLMC

Bonus Ball / Mount Carmel and St Patrick

The bonus ball for Wednesday 14th March: No 15

CollectionsMany thanks

OLMC Sat Loose £168.45 Sun Loose £84.66
Envelopes £114.85 Total £367.96

St Patrick Envelopes £0 Loose £107.27

Box £ 23.00 Brick £5.00

Altar Servers—Mass of Chrism Archbishop Malcolm has issued an invitation to all altar servers to come to this Mass. Altar servers should see me if they would like to go but they must be with their parents.

The Mass of Chrism takes place during Holy Week on the Wednesday evening, the night before Maundy Thursday. During the Mass the Archbishop blesses the Holy Oils which are used in the Sacraments throughout the coming year.

With You Always

Next sessions take place this week:

- Holy Family, this Tuesday 20th March, 3.30pm in school
- St Patrick's, this Wednesday 21st March, 5.30 in school.



St Finbar's and other schools have no more sessions before Easter; the next session is 9th May.

An Evening of Music

by **Joanne Wallace with Martin Fletcher** St Patrick's Church, Friday 13th April at 7.30pm. Tickets £5 (proceeds go to charity) available in the sacristy of OLMC and St Patrick.

Joanne Wallace is an accomplished composer and musician who leads the music at St Francis, Garston, Martin leads the music at St Margaret Mary. The evening will include contemporary Catholic worship music as well as popular Catholic favourites for all to join in with.

OLMC Church Fund Raising The next meeting will be **this Thursday** 22nd March at 7.30 in the Finbar Room.

Adoremus: National Eucharistic Congress



Holy Hours The next Pastoral Area Holy Hour will be led by Archbishop Malcolm at St Anthony of Padua Church, Allerton, on Thursday 12th April at 7.30pm.

These Holy Hours will take place each month. OLMC will host one in May and St Patrick in July.

St Patrick's School Bingo this Wednesday 21st March in the school at 1.30pm.

John Southworth

Please Pray For.... Those who have died:

Tommy Huyton, Ellen Ford, Peter Curtis
The sick: Tony Robinson, Carol Pickford, Betty Billingsley, Sharon Gray, Tommy Duffy, Mary Frances, Audrey McKenna Ian McCafferty, Betty Christian, Bernard Duffy, Helen Melarange, Jack Davies, Joan Higgins, Michael McNicholas, Billy Thompson, Freya Matheson, Rene Humphreys, Clifford Browne, Gary Hollinson, Jackie Heath-Anderson, Ted Cunningham, Anne Deuchar, Charlotte Rice, Irene Finneran, Lisa Balshaw, Mary Kewley, Claire Kearney, Lyn Barton, Betty Devine, Kathleen Devine, Joseph Baxendale, Ann Chapman, Nadia Kent, Susan Roberts, Alex Sielski, Lee Foster, Denise King, John Dunning, Emily Rolands, Angela Kent, David Majoury, Donald Smith, Pius Laizer, Maria Jones, Mary O'Toole, Sally Wilkins, Michael Murphy, Margaret Chung, David Stevenson, Thomas & John Paul Conroy, Keith Holden, Kathleen Crown, Joanne Fairbrother, Eileen Edwards, Erin Caulfield, Lisa Ginley, Lillian O'Connor, Owen Hall, Anne Brannigan, Thelma Mainwaring, Cheryl and Lenny Hart, Sheila Chapman, Elaine Gorry, Alexandra Reid, Winifred Williamson, Kathryn Reid, Wally Williams, Chrissy White, Nicholas Maher, John Hodson, Terry Macklin, Muriel Minshull, Maureen Ryan, Mary Ryan, Regna Lewis, David Shea, Steven Binks.