

Ministry Update

LENT 2016

A newsletter from Kildare and Leighlin Faith Development Services
for parish team members and all parish ministers February 2016

Lay Down Your Burdens... on the Mountain of God's Mercy

This Lent parishes across the diocese are being invited to join in a **diocesan initiative of prayer** in conjunction with the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Parishioners are being invited to take a stone from the parish Lenten space and as they carry it with them, for a few moments, an hour, a day, a week... to reflect and pray about the burdens that they are carrying in their lives while coming to recognise that we do not carry our burdens alone, that God is at our side, walking with us. When ready, parishioners place their stone with the growing mountain of stones in the Lenten space as a visible witness that it is God who is our rock and our strength, the source of our salvation. As a sign of our shared journey across the diocese, a base stone from each parish will be brought by a parish representative to the Chrism Mass in the Cathedral on March 21st

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge. (Psalm 18:2)

The Psalms: a Way to Praise and Mercy

Jubilee of Mercy Lecture

Following on from the very well received lecture last October, Fr Sean Maher will present a second lecture marking the Jubilee of Mercy.

The lecture will take place in Carlow College at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 18.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Stations of the Cross for our Time

This 18 page booklet is available for use by parishes from FDS at a cost of €1.50 + p.p.

From Pope Francis' Lenten Message 2016:

God's mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love, to become merciful in turn. In an ever new miracle, divine mercy shines forth in our lives, inspiring each of us to love our neighbour and to devote ourselves to what the Church's tradition calls the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These works remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbours in body and spirit: by feeding, visiting, comforting and instructing them. On such things will we be judged...Let us not waste this season of Lent, so favourable a time for conversion!

The Corporal Works of Mercy...

are these kind acts by which we help others with their material and physical needs:

*feed the hungry
give drink to the thirsty
clothe the naked
shelter the homeless
visit the sick
visit the imprisoned
bury the dead*

The Spiritual works of Mercy...

are acts of compassion by which we help others with their emotional and spiritual needs:

*counsel the doubtful
instruct the ignorant
admonish sinners
comfort the afflicted
forgive offenses
bear wrongs patiently
pray for the living and the dead*

Kildare and Leighlin Scripture Sharing Booklets

Once more the popular scripture sharing books can be ordered from Faith Development Services. Based on the following Sunday's readings and containing prayers and reflections, this resource offers individuals and/or groups an opportunity to prayerfully reflect on the Word of God.

Books can be ordered with Christine at FDS at a cost of €2.50 + p.p.

Perhaps this is a year to take a fresh look at this resource!

Sunset on Holy Saturday, March 26

6:52 p.m.



***Remember that we are
called to begin the Easter
Vigil in darkness around the
Easter fire.***

Sunrise on Easter Sunday, March 27

7:12 a.m.



Regulations for Fasting in Lent

As Catholics we are asked to abstain from meat and to fast on two days in the year, **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**.

Fasting means that one full meatless meal can be eaten in the day. Two other meatless meals may be taken to maintain strength but together they should not exceed one full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juice, may be taken between meals.

The fasting regulation **applies to** all Catholics aged 18 to 59 while those aged fourteen and above are asked to abstain from meat.

Some people are not required to fast; these include those who are sick, pregnant or nursing women and manual labourers according to need.

In the past Irish Catholics were required to abstain from meat every Friday. While still not a requirement, the Irish Bishops' Conference has suggested it as a form of **Friday Penance** during Lent.

A number of parishes across the diocese are once more taking up the invitation to open up their churches for 24 hours of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and quiet prayer with the availability of the Sacrament of Confession and Reconciliation.

This initiative was begun by Pope Francis in 2014. This year it will take place across the universal Church on March 4-5.

See local bulletins and Kandle.ie to find a church in your area hosting this 24 hours of prayer.

Merciful Like the Father **A Lenten Parish Celebration of the** **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

See kandle.ie to download a liturgy for a parish celebration of sacramental reconciliation. This liturgy links into the diocesan Lenten initiative 'Lay down your burdens...on the mountain of God's mercy'



A Pocket Guide to the **Sacrament of Confession**

To coincide with 24 Hours for the Lord, Faith Development Services will be making available to parishes a pocket guide to the sacrament of confession. This pocket size guide is intended to help people as they come to confession, in some cases after many years away. It can be left in churches or in other places in the community as an invitation for people to come to the sacrament without worrying that they don't know what to do.

*They remembered that God was their
rock, the Most High God their redeemer.
(Psalm 78:35)*

Chrism Mass 2016

Bishop Denis warmly invites parishioners from across the diocese to join him and the priests of the diocese in celebrating the Chrism Mass in the Cathedral on Monday, March 21 at 7:30 p.m. Please come early to be sure of a seat! Parking and refreshments afterwards in Carlow College.

This year we are delighted to welcome many of our young people who will be travelling to World Youth Day to this Mass. Once more the diocesan choir will lead us in song. Rehearsal details will be sent to members.

A Trócaire Programme **REDISCOVERING MERCY**

An Invitation to
Reconnect Faith and Mercy

This four session parish programme invites participants to rediscover mercy in their personal experience, their local community, the world and through prayer and reflection.

This programme is suited to both parish and school and may be an ideal Lenten parish programme in this Jubilee of Mercy.

See trocaire.org to download.

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

(Ezekiel 36:26)

Some Hymns for the Jubilee Year

Here are just a few hymns, from a large repertoire, that parish choirs and music ministers might like to make use of in this Jubilee of Mercy, especially at reconciliation services, Lenten liturgies and on Sundays and other occasions when the readings speak to themes of mercy...

- Hymn for the Holy Year of Mercy (Paul Inwood) (on Kandle.ie)
- Hymn for World Youth Day (on Kandle.ie)
- Deep within I will plant My Law (David Haas) (Gather hymnal)
- Magnificat (various versions)
- Blest be the Lord (Dan Schutte) (Gather hymnal)
- Eternal Is Your Love (Liam Lawton) (Eternal Collection)
- I will lift up my eyes (Tony Alonzo) (Pilgrim collection)
- God of Mercy and Compassion (Michael Hodgetts) (In Caelo)
- Hold us in your mercy (Rory Cooney) (Gather Hymnal)
- Return to God (Marty Haugen) (Gather Hymnal)
- Psalm 103 The Lord is kind and merciful (Jeanne Cotter) (In Caelo)
- Psalm 91 – Be with me Lord (Various)
- Only in God (John Foley) (Gather hymnal)
- God full of mercy (Lucien Deiss)
- There's a wideness in God's Mercy (Frederick Faber) (Gather Hymnal)
- Sing of the Lord's Goodness (Ernest Sands) (Gather Hymnal)

Prayers for a Pilgrim Journey

Parishes have received copies of a prayer guide to accompany anybody who wishes to make a pilgrimage to any of the Holy Doors in the diocese in this Jubilee year.

This prayer can also be downloaded from the diocesan website, kandle.ie

Hearing, Happening, Hoping... a national resource based on the Sunday Scriptures of Lent

This resource aims to help us to listen deeply to the Sunday Gospel and reflect on where we see this Gospel happening in our lives and in the world around us. It invites people to share from their own experience. There is a one page handout for each Sunday to guide a group through this way of reading the Scriptures. Each session ends with a time for prayer and looking forward in hope.

Parishes might also decide to make them available for people to take home with them after Mass by leaving them at the back of the Church or including them with the Sunday newsletter.

This resource can be downloaded from kandle.ie

For further information on any of the content of this newsletter please contact:

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Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)