



The Meaning of Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a shrine or other location of importance to one's faith. The reasons for pilgrimages are extremely varied. They may, for example, be for healing of body or spirit, to obtain God's mercy and forgiveness for sin, to do penance as a sign of one's repentance, to intercede for a loved one or to obtain a blessing (like good exam results); it may be undertaken in gratitude to God or in fulfillment of a vow, or 'in the hope of being touched by the Divine at this place of meeting between heaven and earth' or simply to walk where the saint or Saviour walked, breathe the air they breathed and see the places where they visited earth in apparition, or where they lived and worked - in other words, to concretise what our minds can only imagine.

Pilgrimage as Symbol of Life

In the past, the great pilgrimages to the holy Land and Rome involved incredibly long journeys to and from on boat, horse, mule, donkey or on foot. There was a lot of hardship and expense and mortal dangers at times. "The pilgrim needed written authorisation from the bishop, for without this testimonial letter he was liable to be arrested along the route as an adventurer or a bogus pilgrim - and there were many such... He would often wear penitential garb with a broad-brimmed hat, a shoulder-strap bag and a long stout stick tipped with an iron ferrule". Sometimes there were specific routes to take and specific halting 'stations' of prayer and ritual. The Knights of Malta as well as local confraternities offered defence and general care to pilgrims, especially those who were ill or overcome by the hardships of the journey.

The great pilgrimage was a symbol of human life. It represented the journey each of us makes from birth to death. We are pilgrims 'on the way' to our chosen destination. We encounter in life, as on pilgrimage, many hardships and obstacles, many twisted signposts that could lead us astray. But we stop over at 'prayer stations' and check our spiritual compasses to make sure we are still travelling in the right direction.

The Penitential Pilgrimage

In today's world much of this symbolism is lost. There's less external hassle and stress. Planes and buses and cars land us at our destination. Years and months are reduced to hours and days. But the inward journey of the soul is still valid and the sick and disabled still need our loving care. That's why we still go to Lourdes and Knock and Lough Derg and Rome and the Holy Land and the Camino di Compostela and Medjugorja or wherever.

For all our pilgrimages, to make them truly penitential, Pope Francis indicates two important lessons we should learn and begin to practice on our pilgrim way: (Cf. Luke 6:37f) we should learn to "Judge not and you will not be judged"; when we judge we see no further than the surface, but God looks into the very depths of the soul. Our judgements are often motivated by jealousy and envy and leave our victim a prey to the whims of gossip. But that's not enough, says Francis.

The other step, the other lesson to learn along our pilgrim way is: "Forgive and you will be forgiven". To forgive is to be an instrument of mercy. This is what we seek on our pilgrimage - mercy; this is also what we must give. "Be Merciful like the Father".



Our journey through Lent is an opportunity to 'Look into our hearts'. We live in a world of externals, instant communication, endless news stories, opinions and open communication. The pace of all this external stuff can be relentless with little connection to anything. It leaves little time for personal reflection, for spiritual nourishment and for taking quiet time. There is not much time for looking within or 'looking into our hearts'. This is a loss and from what I can see the loss is getting bigger and deeper.

Our Lenten journey is such an opportune time to look within, to make time for personal reflection, to pause and to be quiet. We will all do this differently but whatever way works for us is always the best way. We have got to mind ourselves. We need to nourish our spirit/soul and to know that in this sometimes chaotic world, we are loved, cherished and special. Lent gives us six weeks to change the emphasis or at least try it out. I hope you will get the chance during the coming weeks

Trocaire Boxes have been distributed to the schools and are also in our churches, Sunday March 13th in Knockea at 11am Mass Sharon Collopy will say a few words on Trocaire



Remembered In Mass		
Donoughmore		
Sun 5th	7pm	Martin Sheahan (3rd), Paddy Shanessy. Patricia O'Mullan (1st)
Mon. 7th	10 am	
Tues 8th	10 am	No Mass
Fri 11th	10 am	John Fenton
Sat 12th	7pm	Des & Kathleen Conway. Breda O'Connell (4th)
Knockea		
Sun 6th	11am	Parish Intentions
Wed 9th	10am	
Sun 13th	11am	Richard Ryan. Breda Sheehan. John Clifford. John Spellacy. Tom & Pauline Gilbert
Roxboro		



Pastoral Council meeting this Wednesday eve 7.pm , Church House

Sympathies Our sympathy to Paul Costelloe and family on the sad passing of his dad Martin, funeral at Donoughmore church on Friday, to Seamus O'Doherty on the passing of his sister Nora de Burca, Lusk Harolds Cross, Dublin, to Ger Kelleher on the passing of his dad Michael, Ballingearry, Co. Cork, funeral was on Wednesday and Eamonn McNerney UK May they rest in Peace.

DKR community Association Meeting will take place in the courthouse on Monday the 7th

Parish of Donoughmore/ Knockea/Roxboro



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The Eircode for St. Patrick's Church, Donoughmore is V94 V6T3.

Knockea is V94 D938.

March at 8pm. Mask wearing is not mandatory but please feel free to wear one if you are more comfortable doing so. --

Pray for Peace Keep the good and noble people of Ukraine in your prayers at this tragic time in their history. There are many families fleeing and sheltering from evil and aggression. If you have friends and neighbours from Ukraine show them your solidarity. We pray the leaders of the world will stand up and confront unjust aggressive, evil actions.



Reflection I have learned that a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks

Weekly Lotto €2,900 winning No. 6,16,21,23 Winner. Michael Lynch Next Jackpot €1,000 Draw Tues. 8th March 9.30pm at the Four Elms Thank you.

