

# Parish Newsletter

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT | 10 MARCH 2019  
CYCLE C | ISSUE 15

In the Irish language, it's interesting that two days of the week refer to fasting ... Ceadaoin (Wednesday) and Aoine (Friday) which literally translate to 'first fast' and 'the fast'. Some say it came from the Latin word 'ieiunum' or fast. The practice in Christianity used to be fasting from meat on two days of the week. We've come a long way since. One of the problems that the producers of the film *Black '47*, which has the Irish Famine as its backdrop, had was that of finding suitably thin film extras. Whatever about material plenty in the Land of Saints and Scholars, have we become spiritually impoverished, despite so many people claiming they're 'spiritual but not religious'? Fasting at least was an outward sign of an inner journey.

The First Reading has Moses remind the people that in Egypt they weren't free. It was the place of 'not enough'. They were at the mercy of Pharaoh, who meted out ill-treatment and on whom they depended. When you have to rely on anyone but God – you are not free. In the Gospel Jesus was tempted by food (turn stones to bread), power (worship me – I will give you glory) and independence (throw yourself down). If you're reliant on the attention and adulation of others (how many 'followers' or 'likes' you get) then you're essentially a slave.



## EASTER IS APPROACHING – FAST!

There are Irish teenagers who spend hours composing a selfie, in the hope that when published online, it will generate sufficient 'likes'. If it doesn't the impact on them can be devastating!

While Lent is a time for some serious reflection, it's not a time for morbid, external shows of piety. If we choose wisely it can be a time of great joy – to show that we belong to Christ, not to anyone else. There is a legend of the Phoenix; It's an imaginary eagle-like bird. It lived in the Arabian Desert and was consumed in a great fire. You will find artists depicting the phoenix rising up majestically from its own ashes. For the Egyptians, who enslaved the Hebrews, it symbolized the daily return of the sun. For

Christians, it became a symbol of Easter: Christ's resurrection and their own. Today we have begun that Lenten journey to Easter. We begin in the desert of temptations, a place of stark choices that mould us as we go on to the light of Easter. ■

– Tom Cox

### Reflection

To what extent has your hunger for power, control and attention caused you to harm others and yourself?

### Lesson

God saves us through the cross of Jesus.

### Prayer

Lord Jesus, as I begin the desert journey of Lent give me strength and courage. Stay with me in time of temptation. Do not allow me to give way to greed but lead me to generous service. Amen.

### THIS WEEK (11-17 MARCH)

- 11 **Mon** St Aengus, bishop and abbot
- 12 **Tue** St Maximilian of Tebessa, martyr
- 13 **Wed** St Euphrasia, virgin
- 14 **Thur** St Leobinus, bishop and abbot
- 15 **Fri** St Louise de Marillac, foundress
- 16 **Sat** St Abban, abbot
- 17 **Sun** SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT / ST PATRICK

### NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS



Amos 7:12-15  
Psalm 138:1-3,7-10,13-14  
1 Thessalonians 2:2-8  
Luke 5:1-11