



# NEWSLETTER 30 OCT 2022

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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## ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Brigid Maher. Mary O'Gorman.

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Mary, Michael, Tom, Martin & Brendan Smith.

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Joseph & Mary O'Reilly. Collin Rafferty. Massimo Lepri.

## ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Christopher (Kit) & Kathy McKeogh & dec.d family members.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Frank, Elizabeth & Patrick Gorman.

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Rose McKeogh.

**Weekday Masses;** Raharney Tues 7.30am & Thurs 9am. Rathwire Wed 7.30pm. & Fri 9am.

MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €567  
PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €557

Patty Keegan, Thomastown.  
Sean Heffernan, Cushinstown.  
Pat Toner, Kildalkey.

**All Saints;** Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. Mass for the Holy Day at 7.30pm in Raharney.

**All Souls;** Feast on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mass for all the Holy Souls offered at 7.30pm in Rathwire. Lists of the dead mat be handed to be included in the Mass and on each first Friday.

**First Friday;** Communion calls attended this week as usual.

**Charity shop;** at Rathwire church opens Tues, Thurs & Fri 11am – 1pm.

## Unveiling the Truth

The story of Zacchaeus is rich in possible interpretations.

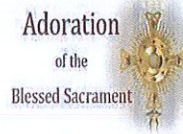
The most popular interpretation is to view the story in terms of conversion. Here is a rich man who has not cared for the victims of poverty and injustice until his encounter with Jesus. His conversion makes a strong statement about the affluent caring for the needs of the poor. It has also been suggested that what changed in Zacchaeus was his concern for those whom he had defrauded. He had always been generous with the poor, but now he cared about all the oppressed. In other words, his growth was from charity to justice.

Recent biblical scholarship has tended to view the story more in terms of the vindication of a person whom society considered a sinner. Everyone thought Zacchaeus was a terrible person because he collaborated, as a tax collector, with the hated occupiers. Jesus unveiled the truth about the man, who in reality was concerned for the welfare of others. The judgmental world was once again proven wrong.

Take your pick! The interpretation of your choice has enormous implications for the pursuit of a better world.

It is the duty of the whole People of God ... to alleviate as far as they are able the sufferings of the modern age. They should do this ... out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous.

Vatican II, [Constitution on the Church in the Modern World](#),



In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.  
& St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:  
*Special Diocesan intention of prayer  
for vocations and the family.*  
**Take one Hour with the Lord**



# Sunday Message

31<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## THE WORD

Year C • 30 October 2022 • Season Colour: Green • Psalter Week 3

### CALLED TO BE SAINTS

LUKE 19:1-10

Today's Gospel is a beautiful story about conversion and how it can happen even to the most unlikely people.

Zacchaeus is one of the chief tax collectors in Jericho for the hated Roman occupiers. His occupation has made him rich, but it has also made him an outcast. To his people, he is a traitor and public sinner.

Zacchaeus hears that Jesus is coming to town and is anxious to see him. He climbs a sycamore tree to get a better view.

As he sits there watching, he nearly dies of shock when Jesus stops right under his tree and asks to spend the night in his house. The crowd is shocked, too – and outraged. "He's gone to a sinner's house as a guest," they murmur.

But Jesus ignores them. He looks Zacchaeus in the eye, sees the good that's in him, and invites him to change. And Zacchaeus changes. Feeling loved and accepted by a fellow Jew for the first time in years makes him a new person. He joyfully receives Jesus and opens his house, heart, and coffers. He will not cheat anybody anymore; instead, he will pay back those he has cheated four times the amount. And he will give half his possessions to the poor.

Now that he is a follower of Jesus, Zacchaeus becomes a new person. He is aware that he has ripped off people in the past and that such behaviour does not correspond with Jesus' way. Because Jesus looked on him with love, Zacchaeus can now look on others and himself with love. His life and manner of living are transformed. ■

### SAY

Lord, help me to be more holy day by day. Help me to draw ever closer to you.

### LEARN

We are all called to be saints.

The Christian is called to constant conversion.

### PRAY

Remember your deceased loved ones on Wednesday, All Souls' Day. Pray that they may be counted among the communion of saints.

### DO

Visit the grave(s) of your beloved dead this week. Ask the Lord to take them to himself.



## REFLECT

Have you ever been called a saint? Do you describe your fellow parishioners as saints? Probably not. That type of talk makes us feel embarrassed and uncomfortable.

But calling other Christians saints was a common practice in the early church. The Acts of the Apostles describes Saul's persecution of the "saints in Jerusalem" (Acts 9:13). Later in Acts, Paul admits that "I put many of the saints in prison" (Acts 26:10). Paul ends his letter to the Philippians with the words, "All the saints send you greetings" (Phil 4:22).

Members of the early church referred to each other as saints. Saints were to be found among the spiritually weak and the spiritually strong, the educated and the uneducated, the poor and the well-off. Anyone baptised in the name of Jesus was among the saints.

Over the centuries, the understanding of sainthood narrowed, and it began to be applied only to exceptionally holy people. Church authorities took over the saint-making process. Candidates had to meet

specific criteria before being formally declared a saint. Sometimes the process is swift. Think of St Teresa of Calcutta or Pope John Paul II. More often, it takes decades or even centuries.

Even though the feast of All Saints honours the multitude of ordinary saints who will never be canonised, we tend to think of sainthood as applying only to a select few. For most of us, being canonised seems out of reach.

Pope Francis wants to change this way of thinking. In 2018, he published an apostolic letter, entitled *Gaudete et Exsultate* (Rejoice and Be Glad), on our call to be saints. In it, he reminds us of the Second Vatican Council's teaching that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord – each in his or her own way – to that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect."

Pope Francis is well aware that being holy is not easy, and he suggests practical steps we can take to become saints. The key, he writes, is the beatitudes, which are the Christian's identity card. He offers a

practical example to show that everyday sanctity is possible.

"This holiness to which the Lord calls you," he writes, "will grow through small gestures. Here is an example: a woman goes shopping, she meets a neighbour and they begin to speak, and the gossip starts. But she says in her heart: 'No, I will not speak badly of anyone.' This is a step forward in holiness. Later, at home, one of her children wants to talk to her about his hopes and dreams, and even though she is tired, she sits down and listens with patience and love. That is another sacrifice that brings holiness. Later she experiences some anxiety, but recalling the love of the Virgin Mary, she takes her rosary and prays with faith. Yet another path of holiness. Later still, she goes out onto the street, encounters a poor person and stops to say a kind word to him. One more step." Each of these gestures is an example of holiness any of us can make any day.

We are not asked to go around calling each other saints. But we are called to be saints. Living according to the beatitudes is how we do it. ■