

PARISH OF POBAL

First Sunday of Lent:

21st of February 2021.

Website: pobalparish.com and Webcam - www.churchservices.tv/Tempo.

Priest: Fr. John Halton, Parochial House, Tempo. Tel. 895 41344.

Sunday Masses: Tempo: 11.00am (via Webcam only)

Weekday Masses: Tuesday 10.00am, Friday 7.00pm via Webcam only.

Anniversaries: Sunday 28th Feb (11.00am) Rosaleen McCusker, Imeroo.

Stations of the Cross: each Monday evening at 7.00pm in Church of Immaculate Conception, Tempo.

Rosary: will be recited each Thursday night at 7.00pm in Church of Immaculate Conception, Tempo

The Word of God: We Catholics often complain that we don't know the scriptures. In fact we have a fixation about scripture. The fixation is very real in our minds but it is not true. We are like an adult learning how to use a computer. The beginner is afraid that they will break it, and are so fearful that they find it hard to use. We Catholics are like that also. We are afraid of reading the Word of God, because we are not used of reading the scriptures. This is a great pity. It is true that there are some concepts in scripture that we must master. These concepts are like hinges on a door. The hinge helps us open and close the door, and the door swings on the hinges. This is also true in scripture. There are hinge words on which the scriptures hang and when we get to know these words the scripture opens up to us. We find two of these hinge word in the scripture. We meet the first of these words in the first reading. The word is "COVENANT". And it is a word on which scripture hangs. When you know the meaning of this word you have already opened up the scriptures and you have gone a great journey in understanding them. The word Covenant means AN "AGREEMENY", "A RELATIONSHIP" "A FRIENDSHIP". God has drawn up an agreement with us. He says ---"I will be your God and you will be my people". "I will offer you a friendship and you will enter a friendship with me", or "I will enter a relationship with you and you will offer a relationship with me". When Jesus speaks to us in scripture he is asking us to grow in our Agreement, Relationship, or Friendship with us so that we can grow in his relationship with him. So Lent is a time when we grow in our relationship with Jesus. During Lent Jesus went out to the desert to grow in his relationship with his father. During Lent, we fast and pray to grow in our relationship with Jesus. We give alms to grow in our relationship with Jesus. We are in a Covenant, a relationship, an agreement, a friendship with Jesus, and he is in a relationship or covenant with us. During our life we grow in our relationship. God made many covenants with his people throughout history. He made one with Noah, one Abraham, and with us on the Cross and through his resurrection. During the celebration of the Mass we renew our Covenant with Jesus. This is why the Mass is central in our lives. We renew the Covenant. We renew the Covenant during Lent. We renew the Covenant through Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. We renew the Covenant during Lent when we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Lent is like a small retreat through which we prepare for Easter.

The second Hinge Word of the scripture today is the word "REPENT" This word is used by John the Baptist and By Jesus in his first sermon to us—"REPENT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND" Like the word "COVENANT". It is a Hinge Word around which alot of the scripture rotates. Once you have that word it is easy to listen to Jesus in the scripture, and it is easy to read the scripture. It accepts that we sometimes fail to carry our side of the Covenant. Therefore we need to turn our lives back to God. We need to rid ourselves of any obstacles in our life which stop us from renewing our life. The biggest blockage of all is our refusal to celebrate Mass on the Lords Day-Sunday. This is a very serious turning away (sin) from God. Why--because the celebration of Mass is the renewal of our Covenant with God, and God's Covenant with us. Bishop Larry in his Pastoral for Lent last week said: "Lent invites us to an inner change of heart, a turning to God, a rejection of all that is evil, an opportunity to walk in a different direction" Prepare the reading of Mass for the following Sunday!

Online Talks for Lent: "Awaken our Baptismal Calling" in Parish ministry is the theme of three online talks on www.clogherdiocese.ie, the first talk will take place on Wednesday next 24th February at 7.30pm – Speaker –Julie Kavanagh on Baptism and Parish Ministry.

Death: We pray for the happy repose of the soul of Mrs Mary McHugh, Mullyknock (mother of Mary Rogers) whose Funeral Mass will be celebrated in St Patrick's Church, Corlough, Co Cavan on Saturday 20th February, 2021. May God console all who mourn her loss.