

Parishes of Glendermott & Strathfoyle

Sunday 29th March 2026

Palm Sunday

God's overwhelming love for each of us

The theme of this week and of today's liturgy is clear. What Jesus experiences for us, is a manifestation of God's overwhelming love for each one of us.

Our celebration of Holy Week is not just of thanks, but of entering together with Jesus, into a new experience of living. It is meant to be real, and not merely religious, pious and devotional make-believe.

So, as we participate in the liturgy of Holy Week, let us not just concentrate simply on the suffering of Jesus as if there was something good about suffering. Suffering only has meaning if it leads to resurrection, new life and new joy. The pain and suffering of our lives are not the punishments of God, still less are they to be sought out.

Suffering, pain, sickness are not in themselves desirable. They become, however, sources of good when they help us to become more mature, more loving, more caring, more sympathetic people – in other words when they lead us to be more like Jesus himself, when they lead to our own liberation and the liberation of others.

His silence said it all ! "Salvation was bought not by Jesus' fist, but by his nail pierced hand; not by muscle but by love; not by vengeance but by forgiveness; not by force but by sacrifice. Jesus surrendered in order that he might win; he conquered death by allowing others to conquer him." **A.W. Tozer**

Suffering and death are unavoidable, but we can say "yes" to them as Jesus did, dying so that God's gift of new life may emerge.

Mass of Chrism – Bishop McKeown will celebrate the annual Mass of Chrism with the priests of the diocese in St Eugene’s Cathedral on **Holy Thursday morning at 10.00am**. During Mass the Holy Oils for Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick and Ordination are blessed. Also, the priests renew their Ordination promises. It is the only Mass celebrated in the diocese on Holy Thursday morning. Everyone is welcome to attend the Chrism Mass.

Baptisms – We welcome into the family of God – **Croia Siobhan Gallagher**, Hollymount Park and **Leo Lewinski**, Tullymore Road.

Deaths – We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of **Elizabeth Clarke**, Knockwellan Park, **Bernadette Dinsmore**, Blackburn Crescent

Anniversaries – We are asked to remember in our prayers Georgina Harrison, Mary Murphy, Tony Canavan, Joan Nash, Margaret McIntyre, Frank Clarke, Celine Deehan, Hugh Deehan, Felix Doherty, Paula Coyle, William Ball, Paddy Maguire, Anna Anthony, Jim McGill, Eddie Mailey, Johnny Sharkey, Martin & Mark Gibbons, John Callan, Jim Campbell, Patrick Brown, Lavina O’Doherty, Sean Friel, Brian McChrystal, Sean Carr.

Offertory Collection: Glendermott: £5,232.00 Strathfoyle: £515.00

On Easter weekend please use the spare envelope in your box

Thank you for your generosity to the parish collections.

Holy Land Collection – A collection will be taken up at the church doors on Good Friday to help the suffering Christians in the land of Our Saviour’s birth.

Cemetery Sunday – Outdoor Blessing of the graves will take place on **Sunday 31st May 2026**. 3.00pm in Ballyoan and Altnagelvin Cemeteries and 6.00pm in Ardmore cemetery.

Vocations – For an increase in vocations, and for the future priests of our diocese, that they will follow the example of Jesus, the humble, faithful, and suffering Servant who gave His life for God’s people.

The Columban Community warmly invites you to its Palm Sunday Retreat on today **Sunday, 29th March** at 11.00am in St Anthony’s Retreat Centre, Dundrean.

Derry Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage: Mon 29th June to Friday 3rd July: Due to the great demand for places, we have secured 50 extra seats ex-Dublin direct to Lourdes and return, with complimentary bus to the Airport. The fare is £895 pps full board. If you wish to book, please contact the pilgrimage office at 164 Bishop St. Derry, Tel 02871 260293, email: derrypilgrim@outlook.com

Gift Aid – A very significant amount of our income comes from Gift Aid. This comes at no extra cost to those who are contributing. If you are paying tax on your income all that is required is that you complete the Gift Aid Form and use a Gift Aid envelope when making your offertory contribution at Mass.

New Offertory Envelopes will be available shortly. We need volunteers to distribute Gift Aid envelopes to the different areas of our parish. Help would be greatly appreciated – if you can help, please let the office know.

Holy Week Reflections:

Lent is a journey – travelling with Jesus as he returns from temptation in the wilderness to his victory over death on the cross in Jerusalem. As we journey through Lent Jesus journeys with us.

Palm Sunday - Jesus begins on what he knows will be a difficult journey. This is the start of our walk with Jesus through Holy week.

Monday – Mary ignored social distancing rules and poured an expensive perfume on the feet of Jesus.

Tuesday – At supper Jesus is troubled, one present will betray him. On the holy week journey Jesus walked with friends, yet one was to let him down.

Wednesday – Imagine the anxiety in the room – wondering who the betrayer is. Betrayal hurts. Jesus must have been hurt and disappointed.

Thursday – Today we celebrate Jesus washing the disciple's feet and giving us the Eucharist.

Friday – The journey is close to its end. A Journey he knew would end on a cross. It was a lonely journey, betrayal and fear. Loneliness is part of the lives of many people.

Saturday – For most people present at the spectacle of the crucifixion hope was lost, gone. All that was left was the practicalities of death. Holy Saturday is a strange day in the church calendar.

Holy Saturday Evening. *If not attending the Easter Vigil, light a candle (or a few) "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1.5)*

Mass and Ceremony Schedule for Holy Week

Monday – Wednesday

St Columb's Church	7.15am, 10.00am & 7.30pm
Immaculate Conception Church	9.15am
St Oliver Plunkett Church	11.00am
St Mary's Oratory	11.00am (Wednesday only)

Holy Thursday:

St Oliver Plunkett Church	7.00 pm*
St Columb's Church	7.30 pm
Immaculate Conception	7.30pm

continuing with prayers at Altar of Repose until 10.00pm.

Good Friday:

10.00am St Columb's Church,
Morning Prayer of the Church.

3.00pm St Columb's Church – Passion of the Lord.

3.00pm St Oliver Plunkett Church – Passion of the Lord.

7.00pm Church of Immaculate Conception – Passion of the Lord.

Holy Saturday: 10.00am St Columb's Church:
Morning Prayer of the Church
8.00pm Easter Vigil in all Churches.

Easter Sunday: Usual Sunday Masses as schedule.

Confessions: *St Columb's Church* - Palm Sunday 5.00pm until evening Mass.
Monday – Thursday before evening Mass.

St Oliver Plunkett Church – Monday 11.30am until end of Adoration.
Church of Immaculate Conception – Thursday and Friday after the ceremonies.

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