

# Resources for your News

Sunday, 4 November 2018

## SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

**Mark 12:28-34**

1. Today's gospel brings us right to the heart of what a Christian life involves: love of God and of neighbour. Jesus tells us that having life both now and in the future is the fruit of living in a spirit of love. How have you experienced the power of love given, and received, as a source of life and vitality?
2. If you were asked what is most important in life, what would your answer be? Recall the experiences and relationships you have had. Which are the ones that you treasure most? What has particularly enriched your life? How would you encourage another person who asked you how s/he could live a full life?
3. Jesus praises the questioner as one who had answered wisely. Recall some of the wise people you have known, people who in their words and actions impressed you with their capacity to see and treasure what is important in life.

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## MUSINGS

Listen, Israel: The Lord our God is the one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. These ancient and sacred words are for the faithful Jew the key source of individual identity and social cohesion... Those of us who are older remember a time when we Catholics derived a similar confidence in our personal identity and our community belonging from the private piety and public worship of the tradition handed down to us. I remember too as a child being truly impressed at the sight of Belfast Jews, the men and boys sporting their skull caps, as they took the bus to the Synagogue on Saturday mornings. Nowadays it is our Moslem brothers and sisters who take the prize in our cities for an easy, unselfconscious fidelity to their religious practices.

*Fr James O'Kane,  
Shortish Homilies for 2017/18 (Year B)*



Sunday, 11 November 2018

## SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

**Mark 12:38-44**

1. The scribes are presented as ostentatious and devious, acting more out of self-interest than the love of God or people. There can be an element of self-interest in each of us. Perhaps there have been times when you have been disturbed by glimpsing in yourself 'other motives' in your doing good. Recall when you were awakened to this fact. Where was the good news for you in that awakening?
2. In material terms, what the widow had to offer was very little. Recall when you felt yourself called to give, and gave even though you apparently had very little. Perhaps you have had the experience of finding that what you thought was little and insignificant meant a great deal to another person. Recall some of those moments.
3. The widow 'gave everything she had, all she had to live on'. In doing so she placed herself in a very vulnerable position, trusting that things would work out. Have you ever found that what seemed a generous but reckless giving of yourself proved life-giving for yourself and others?

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## MUSINGS

If Jesus draws our attention to the generosity of the poor widow captured forever in this splendid Gospel page, it is no doubt because it is an image of his own redemptive generosity. Everything has been given. There is nothing left to give. Jesus surrenders himself totally in his death on the cross and in that act of redemptive generosity he opens up for us the way to salvation. If we are to share with him the glory of resurrection we will need, first of all, to share in the sacrificial generosity of his death. Our generosity, our surrender, needs to match his. This is the promise of our Baptism, what we commit ourselves to afresh every time we involve ourselves in the dynamic of the Mass.

*Fr James O'Kane,  
Shortish Homilies for 2017/18 (Year B)*



Sunday, 18 November 2018

Sunday, 25 November 2018

## SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

**Mark 13:24-32**

1. Jesus speaks of the established order falling apart, but the collapse of the old order opened the way for new possibilities. When have you seen something new and hopeful emerge after the collapse of something that you had expected to endure much longer, perhaps even for ever?
2. The parable of the fig tree. Even in winter, it begins to put forth leaves which give a hint of the fruit to come. Where have you found signs of hope in a wintry situation – in your own life, in the life of some group, in the life of the Church?
3. Jesus proposes no clear time-scale for the events being foretold, so the final sentence (v.32) is a call to alertness, to live the present to the full. What difference does it make to you when you are able to live the present moment to the full?

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## MUSINGS

The Christian tradition speaks of a moment of judgment in which we become who we are once and for all. In death we are thrust out into God. Some find themselves at home with God. That is where they belong – in heaven. Others are not yet ready for God and they experience the purification that we call purgatory. Others still find that they do not belong with God at all but that have nowhere else to go and so they are stuck – as stuck in death as they were in life. Yes, that much at least no one will want to dispute: You don't have to wait for death to experience hell. Hell is the reality of a great many people's lives here and now: cut off from God, cut off from their true selves, cut off from those around them in the isolation of compulsion and fantasy.

*Fr James O'Kane,  
Shortish Homilies for 2017/18 (Year B)*



## SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

**John 18:33-37**

1. The feast we have today, and the Gospel, give us an opportunity to reflect on the different ways in which we, and others, exercise influence and leadership. The authority of Pilate came from position and power. The authority of Jesus came from his integrity and what he stood for. Recall leaders you have known whose influence was like that of Jesus.
2. The values of the kingdom of God cannot be imposed. It is never a matter of fighting battles, or forcing others into compliance. Perhaps through experience you have learned the limitations of the use of force, as a parent, a teacher, a group leader. What has been the good news, the learnings for you, in this?
3. Jesus came to bear witness to the truth that we are all created for a purpose. What do you believe is the purpose of your life? Recall times when you have been able to bear witness to this. What fruit has this witness had for yourself and/or others?

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## MUSINGS

Those who are too good, too gentle, too sincere, too meek, too humble, end up, as a rule, exploited and mocked, sacrificed on the altar of expediency. So it is in the kingdoms of this world. The world knows that too much goodness leads to the cross and takes time off from its obsession with personal and collective security to laugh heartily at such naivety. The truth that the world cannot perceive is that goodness leads through the cross to resurrection and life. Pilate thought to survive, but he survived only to live wretchedly and die another day. The secret of Jesus is that those who are willing to die today to the selfish demands of survival at any price will live forever... It is Jesus, not Pilate, who is truly free.

*Fr James O'Kane,  
Shortish Homilies for 2017/18 (Year B)*

