



DARE TO DREAM

Autumn Series

Week Beginning September 26th

26th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Before you begin read this from 'Message of his Holiness Pope Francis for the 107th world day of migrants and refugees 2021'

The Catholic faithful are called to work together, each in the midst of his or her own community, to make the Church become ever more inclusive as she carries out the mission entrusted to the Apostles by Jesus Christ: "As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment" (Mt 10:7-8).

In our day, the Church is called to go out into the streets of every existential periphery in order to heal wounds and to seek out the straying, without prejudice or fear, without proselytising, but ready to widen her tent to embrace everyone. Among those dwelling in those existential peripheries, we find many migrants and refugees, displaced persons and victims of trafficking, to whom the Lord wants his love to be manifested and his salvation preached. "The current influx of migrants can be seen as a new "frontier" for mission, a privileged opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ and the Gospel message at home, and to bear concrete witness to the Christian faith in a spirit of charity and profound esteem for other religious communities. The encounter with migrants and refugees of other denominations and religions represents a fertile ground for the growth of open and enriching ecumenical and interreligious dialogue" (Address to the National Directors of Pastoral Care for Migrants, 22 September 2017).

Video - Watch and listen to Canon Michael Fitzpatrick

Prayerfully read this passage from the Gospel of Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with

one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

- Take some time to ponder on the words you have just read.
- Notice if there is anything, a word or phrase that stands out for you.
- Read the passage again and then reflect upon all or some of these questions: if you are doing this as a family or a group, make sure everyone is given the opportunity to speak.

Personal Reflections

- How does our Gospel reading this week make you feel?
- What impact does this have on you?
- How would you explain it to someone who is not a Christian?

Now thinking about your parish and local community

- 'But they're not one of us' is a catch-phrase that can be raised in many contexts. Are there people in our community that we wittingly or unwittingly exclude because they are not Catholic or Christian?
- Who are the people we are called to embrace when many in society reject them?
- How do we avoid allowing social media, newspapers, and other forms of news to dictate our image of groups of people – e.g., asylum seekers, Muslims, refugees, people on benefits? What can we do to negate the negative messages in society?

Action

- Hold an awareness evening to understand the plight of those who are trafficked, those who are seeking asylum or those who are fleeing from war torn countries.
- Become a parish that supports local groups working in these areas.
- Some possible organisations to get involved in:

<https://www.medaille-trust.org.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtOcgcie35g>

<https://www.garas.org.uk/>

<https://choices.somerset.gov.uk/025/send/syrian-refugee-support-group/>

Finish with a prayer asking the Holy Spirit for the grace to respond.

