

This year our focus for Lent is St Mark's Gospel, the shortest Gospel: only 16 chapters. Unlike the Gospels according to St Matthew and St Luke, St Mark does not offer any information about the life of Jesus before his baptism and ministry. Instead it opens with the words: 'The beginning of the good news...' (Mk 1:1). Straight away we are introduced to Jesus who came to John the baptizer and was baptised in the river Jordan before beginning his ministry in Galilee. St Mark's Gospel is unique as it begins with a declaration of its purpose and its opening sentence proclaims that: This is how it all started; this is the rise of the Gospel – the Good News (evangelion) which now, two millenniums later, continues to be preached in the whole world.

St Mark's Gospel provides us with a powerful picture of Jesus as the suffering Son of Man. The insight about the Cross is central and has shaped the whole Gospel.

St Mark's Gospel is characterised by realism and vividness, and gives a full and elaborate descriptions. It is written with many details that add colour to the message. Furthermore, it offers the readers details of Jesus' manners, looks and gestures. The Gospel is written in an open and honest style, and individuals are described as they are, including faults when that is the case.

Programme:

Monday 27th of February:



Who is Mark?

Rt Revd John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher, will introduce the man Mark. Bishop John was for nine years the rector of a Church dedicated to Mark. During the evening we will learn more about Mark and his significance. For instance, why is he often pictured in art as a lion?

Monday 5th of March:



What is so special with St Mark's Gospel?

Canon Helene T. Steed, Rector of Clones, will give an overview of the Gospel. St Mark's Gospel has a chorological, geographical, and theological structure. Together we will study the composition of the Gospel as well as discover some unforgettable passages with wonderful details.

Monday 19th of March:



Follow me and fish for people.

Revd Henry Blair, Rector of Magheraculmoney (Kesh), will talk on discipleship. What it is to be a follower of Jesus today? Reading St Mark's Gospel, it is evident that discipleship is a central topic in the Gospel. With honesty we are told that it is not always easy to be a disciple and sometimes it may bring suffering (13:9-13).

Monday 26th of March:



Schish, be quiet – do not say anything!

Revd Bryan Kerr, Rector of Lisbellaw, will explain why Jesus sometimes explicit said: Do not tell anyone. Remain silent about what has happened. This he said after casting out demons, (1:34), after