



# Restoration Ministries

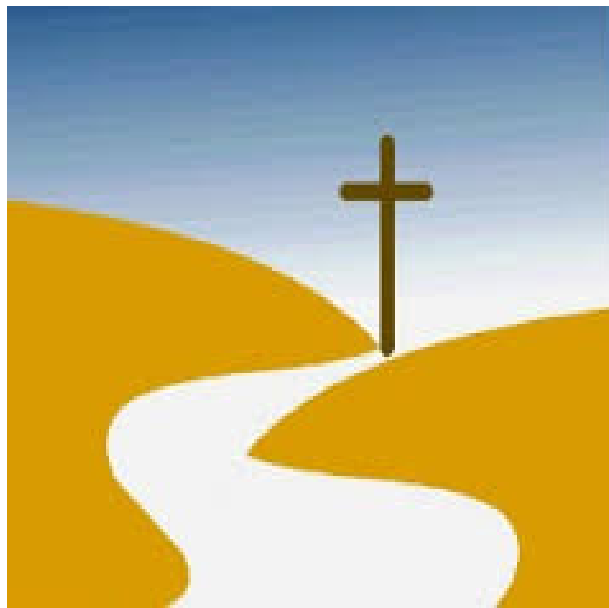
He Restores My Soul

Spring 2014

*Dear Friends,*

*Right on the cusp of his public ministry, after his baptism by John when he received that affirmation of his belovedness and the Father's delight in him, it seems initially rather strange to read that it was the Spirit, God himself, who led or drove Jesus into the wilderness there to be tempted by the devil. In some sort of unity, however tenuous, two thousand years later, we, as people of faith, still seek to live these days of Lent with a heightened awareness of who Jesus is, of what his earthly journey cost him and how we can be, in some small way, companions on the journey, fellow pilgrims on this way of hard choices. So during these forty days, some people fast, some deny themselves certain material pleasures, some attend bible studies or a series of lectures. All of these, even the seemingly more trivial ones, are important insofar as they lead us beyond the two-dimensional that characterizes much of our living, to a fresh awakening of what it means to be spiritual beings on an earthly journey.*

*Luke tells us that Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry. All that he had lived during the largely silent preceding years had been leading up to this point – and now the time had come. In what way was he going to announce his mission, who he was? This was what he wrestled with during those hard, relentless, wilderness of Judea. presented themselves to attractive – the ways of popularity, of dominion. and want to be worker who might political, religious and much effort on their whoever gave them yoke of their oppressors otherwise dull, hard glorious technicolour. would do anything for chosen such a route – later, be reflecting on of the Kingdom of God, not one of power and*



*gives itself away for the sake of the beloved. Being fully human, he wrestles with the choice, watched by wild beasts and angels, refuting each seductive lure with the word of God that had been woven into his being from earliest childhood. And, instead, he turns towards a seemingly incongruous path. He sets his face toward the way of littleness, of vulnerability, of mercy and tenderness; he chooses to look to the margins and, practising the sacrament of encounter, to draw people in, unlikely people, hurting people, rejected people, the poor and broken, those without a name or a sense of belonging and, in so doing, to reveal to them that they are beautiful (which is one understanding of what it means to love someone.) He elects to go to those who have been cast out - either by their own actions or the actions of others and to welcome them back in as part of the one family of God. Alone in the wilderness he wins through to a total authenticity and integrity – no gap between what he says and what he does and who he is – an image bearer of hope,*



*an icon of love, the Saviour of the world. In large part, this will not be recognised by the world, but, in the unseen world that is all about us, the angels rejoice and perhaps he hears again the gentle whisper, like a puff of wind in the scorching desert, 'You are my beloved Son and I am fully pleased with you.'*

*To make a decision is a strange thing. It's as if, as we journey, we have to do it again and again at a deeper level. No such thing as choosing to go in a certain direction and then cruising relatively easily toward our goal! I prefer the image of the Way choosing us – and even then we have to be in a state of readiness to comply. And sometimes, when the going gets very tough, we fight tooth and nail for an easier pilgrimage than the one we find ourselves on while, at the same time, knowing somewhere in the deep recesses of our souls that we could not turn back.*

*What does it mean for us to take an equally incongruous path to the one Jesus took, to pilgrim with him, not just through these 40 days of Lent but for the rest of our earthly journey? What would it demand of us to set our faces towards the way of tenderness, of vulnerability, of littleness? To choose to go such a way is to accept the little path, letting go of pretence, of power and control and the desire to manipulate – even for a seemingly greater good. Can we freely look to the margins and recognise yet again the radical nature of a culture of encounter that draws people in, especially those who feel themselves to be lost, forgotten, without a name, rejected – and reveal to them that they are beautiful? Can we see in our groping towards a unity interpreted as diversity embraced by love, the inter-connectedness of all things whose very centre is the love that flows ceaselessly between the three persons of the Trinity?*

*So, dear friends, as you pilgrim through Lent, we wish you courage and hope. May we all win through to the joy and peace of Easter.*



*Ruth*



Dromantine Retreat & Conference Centre

## Preached Retreat

By

Rev Dr. Ruth Patterson & Fr. Des Corrigan

Title: "Meeting with Jesus"

Dates:

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 6pm – Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May

To book ring 028 30821964 or email

[admin@dromantineconference.com](mailto:admin@dromantineconference.com)



Ruth will be speaking

At

St Finnian's Parish Church  
Cregagh

Holy Week (14-18<sup>th</sup> April) -  
Monday to Friday at 7.30 pm



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