



**LOUGH
DERG**



“Lough Derg is a wonderful island of God’s grace, love and mercy. It is the ultimate place for the stretch of spiritual self-care.”

Reflection by Pilgrim Jim, 2018

2019 SEASON

*Programme of Spiritual
refreshment in changing times...*

2019 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS...

ONE DAY RETREATS

The season officially opens on **Saturday 4th May 2019**.

One Day Retreats enable more people to enjoy the serenity of this Island and keep connected with the spirituality of Lough Derg.

Dates detailed on page 4.

THREE DAY PILGRIMAGE

Commences on **Friday 31st May 2019** and continues until Tuesday 13th August.

One can begin the pilgrimage on any day between these dates.

(Three Day Pilgrimage ends on Thursday 15th Aug 2018).

SPECIAL DAYS

► **QUIET DAYS** *Mon 13th May & Fri 6th Sept*

► **DAY OF FRIENDSHIP & PRAYER**
Wed 15th May

Guest Speaker Fr Peter McVerry SJ, widely respected across the country as a tireless advocate for social justice.

► **NEW PARISH MINISTRY DAY** *Sat 18th May*

Guest Speaker Jim Deeds has served in The Living Church leadership in Down and Connor Diocese.

► **SENIORS AFTERNOON** *Tue 28th May*

► **LIVING WITH SUICIDE DAY** *Sat 28th Sept*

Guest Speaker Conor McCafferty, director of ZestNI, Northern Ireland's leading organisation in healing the hurt of self-harm and suicide.

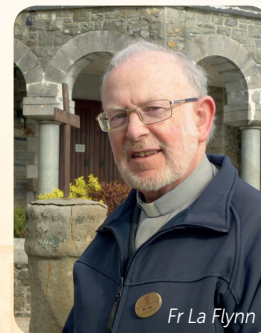
“Welcome to this year's Season Guide to our programme of retreats and pilgrimages on Lough Derg.”

Today's culture can be challenging for people of faith and for all who put store on the deeper and more lasting things that lie below the fast-moving surface of daily life.

Our mindset, one that accepts the reality of the God of compassion revealed in the words and the wonderful way of Jesus, can be undermined by an excessively material worldview.

Our hearts, that cherish a hope that life is filled with profound meaning despite the worst that may come our way, can become troubled in the midst of a society that has lost its confidence about eternal certainties.

Even our behaviour and our actions, how



Fr La Flynn

we spend our time from day to day and from hour to hour, can so easily lose focus on what is really wholesome and life-giving for us and for our world today.

Lough Derg continues to hold its place firmly among the experiences that offer an opportunity for people to find support and accompaniment for faithful, hope-filled living in changing and challenging times.

We hope you might choose to be part of the Lough Derg pilgrim family this season, and we look forward to welcoming you on Station Island.

RETREAT DATES

MAY: Sat 4th, Sun 5th, Mon 6th, Sat 11th, Sun 12th, Tues 14th, Sun 19th, Tues 21st, Sat 25th, Sun 26th, Mon 27th.

AUGUST: Sat 17th, Sun 18th, Mon 19th, Tues 20th, Sat 24th, Sun 25th, Mon 26th, Tues 27th, Sat 31st.

SEPTEMBER: Sun 1st, Wed 4th, Sat 7th, Mon 9th, Tues 10th, Sat 14th, Sun 15th, Sat 21st, Sun 22nd, Sun 29th.



ONE DAY

The popular One Day Retreats – now in their 28th year – continue to facilitate a wide range of people who would want to come on pilgrimage to Lough Derg. On a One Day retreat experience shoes remain on and a light lunch is served.

This island – so long associated with St Patrick and consecrated, we might say, by sustained pilgrim prayer and penance over countless generations – is happy to welcome you to be part of its living tradition.

A day for busy people who would really appreciate a break away from what may feel like a relentless routine, and for those who already value the time they can find in life for the deeper things. The One Day Retreats offer encouragement and support for the journey. You will return home refreshed.

RETREATS

RETREAT PROGRAMME

One Day Retreats offer a flexible programme of prayer and reflection. The day concludes with the celebration of Mass in St Patrick's Basilica.

**The Retreat programme runs
10.30am - 4.30pm**

(Pilgrims arrive from 9.15am)

The day retreat is open to adults and not suited to children. *(Fasting or walking barefooted is not required).*

Boat times: Available from 9.15am and return from 4.30pm.

Crossing approx. 10 mins.

Advanced booking is essential

Admission €45

A SHORT GUIDE TO YOUR ONE DAY RETREAT

One Day Retreats are guided days of prayer and reflection and include Prayers of Intercession, reflection on life with scripture, the option of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the celebration of Eucharist in St Patrick's Basilica.

The afternoon also offers an opportunity for quiet time and for Eucharistic Adoration.

Hospitality on the day includes tea/coffee & scones on arrival and a light lunch is served.

It is advisable to wear/bring warm and waterproof clothing (pilgrims keep footwear on).

SPECIAL DAYS



Each season there are alternative events inviting people to experience the Island in different ways. One Pilgrim's reflection: *"Lough Derg is a special place, a hidden treasure. It is a place of beauty and rhythm, which provides sanctuary from much of the routine of modern living...just the sounds of creatures of nature, the lapping of the lake water, and buildings and spaces which nourish the spirit."*

QUIET DAYS

Mon 13th May & Fri 6th September

A Quiet Day offers you precious time one-to-One with God, at your own pace, in the context of Lough Derg's spiritual tradition. Listen to your God speaking "in the still, small voice", within and without, in the sounds and sights of nature, in memory and imagination, in Word and in silence. Spiritual direction available. Refreshments offered on arrival, and a light lunch.

A DAY OF FRIENDSHIP & PRAYER

Wed 15th May

This day gives an opportunity for members from various Christian churches to share prayer and fellowship. Our guest speaker this year is Fr Peter McVerry SJ, widely respected across the country as a tireless advocate for social justice, especially on behalf of those who find themselves without a secure place to call home.

NEW PARISH MINISTRY DAY

Sat 18th May

A new event on Lough Derg, to offer spiritual refreshment for those who give service to others in their parishes: readers, safeguarding personnel, parish pastoral and finance people, baptism and liturgy teams and so many others. Our speaker and regular pilgrim Jim Deeds has served in The Living Church leadership in Down and Connor Diocese.

LIVING WITH SUICIDE DAY

Sat 28th September

Our key speaker on this special retreat day will again be Conor McCafferty, director of ZestNI, psychotherapist and widely respected for his leading work in the area of suicide prevention and bereavement. This retreat offers support to people who struggle with suicide ideation or who are affected by suicide through personal loss, to those who minister to the suicide bereaved or work in support services.



Pilgrimage is a meaningful journey to a sacred place...

...the Three Day Pilgrimage offers clarity around what is wholesome and life giving.

Why people, young and old, continue to be drawn to this sacred Island cannot be explained in mere words. Everyone's personal pilgrim journey is special to them and the experience can bring unconscious spiritual depths to the light of awareness; pilgrims often remark that what they got from the experience was something entirely unexpected. Pilgrim Mary reflecting on

completing her Three Day Pilgrimage wrote, "Our pilgrimage was mind blowing - I wish I could hold and bottle this feeling and share it with everyone in the whole world."

Come have your own personal, unique experience in the atmosphere of compassion and healing which pervades the setting of the Island.

A SHORT GUIDE TO YOUR THREE DAY PILGRIMAGE

- ▶ The Three Day Pilgrimage follows a centuries-old pattern prayer.
- ▶ The pilgrimage programme includes prayer and quiet reflection in bare feet, keeping Vigil (24 hrs) and maintaining the Fast (one simple Lough Derg meal each day). Pilgrims must be over 15 years, physically able to walk and kneel unaided and to maintain the Fast.
- ▶ Pilgrims can arrive from 11.00am on the first day having fasted from midnight and depart on the third day at 10.00am. Pre-booking is not required.
- ▶ Boat times: Daily between 11.00am & 3pm. Crossing approx. 10 mins.
- ▶ Admission €75; student discount 15%, concessions for seniors and groups.



(Last day to begin your Three Day Pilgrimage Tuesday 13th August)

"You arrive on the Island and think ...Oh my goodness! And you leave the Island thinking OH MY GOODNESS! I can't wait to clock up the number of times I can do it." *Pilgrim Sandra*



"Lough Derg is not a special club for 'holy Joes' – it's just the opposite." *Pilgrim Eamon*

"Very empowering experience. Lough Derg brings you solace and balance in abundance. It's the best investment I have ever made in myself." *Pilgrim Ciara*

"There is a tremendous sense of community and love amongst everyone who is on pilgrimage. Lough Derg is the place to go to step off the world for two days and experience a deep sense of peace and healing." *Pilgrim Martin*

"The miracle of Lough Derg is being able to go home and cope with life." *Pilgrim Erin*

"Challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful." *Pilgrim Marie*

"The internet can be a beast or a miracle and on this occasion it was a miracle. I found Lough Derg all the way from Arizona. This place, WOW!" *Pilgrim John*

"I have never in my life experienced such a profound sense of tranquillity and of having come home" *Pilgrim Joseph*



NATIONAL YOUTH PILGRIM AGE 2019

Led by Bishop Donal McKeown and the Lough Derg Team.

21-23
JUNE '19



Bishop Donal McKeown and Erin Hutchinson.

"I thought after exam season I'd take time away from everything and came with a few friends which made it a lot easier." *Bronwyn*



Pilgrims Bronwyn and Declan part of a larger group from St. Louis, Ballymena.

"I was here last year for the first time and I can honestly say this year was even better, I have made so many new friends." *Declan*

Young people from across the island of Ireland are invited to gather together for the ironman of pilgrimages, the Three Day Pilgrimage on Lough Derg from 21 – 23 June (arrive early afternoon on first day, stay two nights and depart by 10.00am on third morning)
Youth Pilgrimage Island admission: €64/£55

THE ISLAND IS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR School & Organised Youth Retreats

May | September | October | 2019

During May, September and October Lough Derg especially welcomes school year groups, John Paul II Award participants, Parish & Diocesan Youth Groups for One or Two Day Retreats.

Adeline Bruen, Teacher Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblaney has been bringing 6th year students on retreat to Lough Derg for over 10 years,

'...time has no consequence here, it's a day where the students can be at home with God, nature and themselves. It's a change of scene, change of pace, it's being on an Island, being remote...it offers something deeper for the young people.'

Contact Nuala at Lough Derg about school and youth retreats on **071 9861518** or **groupreservations@loughderg.org**



10 REASONS TO 'DO' LOUGH DERG

The tiny island on Lough Derg is unique among the world's holy sites. Here are **ten reasons** why you should experience this utterly unique **Three Day Pilgrimage**...

01 IT'S THE IRONMAN OF PILGRIMAGES

Three days of fasting, staying awake for the 24-Hour vigil... all done in your bare feet. Comparisons with the toughest athletic endurance event in the world are not unwarranted.

03 EXPERIENCE GOD'S MERCY

On Lough Derg you'll see yourself as you truly are. Without shoes, food and sleep you'll become aware of how weak and fragile you are and so become more open to experience the embrace of God's mercy.

02 HAVE A DIGITAL DETOX

It's hard to hear God amidst the constant ping of electronic devices. The island is a mobile free zone. So withdraw from the world and its noise for just three days to experience the peace of God's love on this island of quiet miracles.

04 WALK IN ST PATRICK'S FOOTSTEPS

The original cave on the island was said to be the site where St Patrick was shown a vision of Purgatory. The remains of monastic prayer cells still form a key part of the pilgrimage.

05 FIND YOUR MUSE

Lough Derg has inspired numerous poets, including Nobel Prize winner Seamus Heaney. Bring a notebook - you may be surprised how creative you'll become.

08 FIGHT THE DEVIL

In past centuries, pilgrims were sealed in a cave on the island for 24 hours. They were Christian soldiers engaged in a spiritual battle against the devil and sin, with penance as their weapon. Today, pilgrims keep to ancient forms of penance (but we won't lock you in a cave!).

06 HELP WITH TOUGH DECISIONS

Many people who face life-changing decisions undertake the pilgrimage. It gives breathing space to make the right choice and to discover God's will for your life while building the spiritual muscle to respond to God generously.

09 UPGRADE YOUR PRAYER LIFE

You'll find that the 24-hour Vigil offers a unique invitation to pray in a profound and sustained way. It can lead you beyond words into a humble silence before God.

07 BE COUNTER-CULTURAL

One of the oldest continuous pilgrimages in Europe, Lough Derg is the antidote to the expensive and often meaningless package holiday. It is about self-discovery, reflection and transformation. You won't get that in Magaluf. Be a pilgrim, not a tourist.

10 FIND HEALING

We all carry hurts. Pilgrims can encounter healing in undertaking three days of spiritual exercises. The priests and professional counsellors on the island are available to offer a listening ear and their support.

THE IRONMAN OF PILGRIMAGES

Reputed to be the most challenging in all of Christendom...

The Irish Times 2018



*"Oh my goodness...
what did we achieve!"*

Student Group from Queen's University,
Belfast on Pilgrimage July 2018.

