

Auschwitz did not drop from the sky'

Michael Commane:

Today, February 2 is the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, also called Candlemas.

The meaning of the feast has changed over the centuries. That might give us an appreciation of how our faith-life needs to adapt to the times in which we live.

February 2 is an important date in the Russian calendar.

On February 2, 1943 the battle of Stalingrad came to an end. It had begun on August 23, 1942 and, against all the odds, the Red Army under the command of Marshal Georgi Zhukov defeated Friedrich Paulus's Sixth Army.

But for that victory on the river Volga it is most likely that the liberation of Auschwitz would not have happened as early as it did. Indeed, many historians will say that the victory at Stalingrad, now called Volgograd, was the turning point in World War II.

And the Russians paid a terrible price. They lost approximately 1.5 million people.

Vasily Grossman, a war correspondent with the Red Army, wrote an account of the lead-up to Stalingrad. 'Stalingrad' was translated into English last year. Grossman, a Ukrainian of Jewish faith, is often spoken of as Russia's 20th century equivalent to Leo Tolstoy. It's well worth a read.

It's strange how we see history. In the 1950s and '60s in Ireland most of us heard about D-Day but who was aware of Stalingrad?

Watching and reading about the commemoration events at Auschwitz in recent days one is reminded of the barbarity that the Germans unleashed on the world. When we call them Nazis it's easy to hide their humanity, turn them into something 'non-human'. But they were Germans, ordinary German men and women. It was the Germans who elected the National Socialist Workers Party of Germany (Nazis) to power. The German working people felt betrayed and humiliated after World War I and the subsequent events that impoverished them.

At the 75th commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz by the Red Army a former inmate said that Auschwitz did not drop from the sky.

Marian Turksi reminded world leaders present that Auschwitz-Birkenau was the end point of a process that began with exclusion: from park benches, bakeries, parks, pools.

"Once a new reality of stigmatisation and exclusion was established, it was a short step to strip further rights, to dehumanise and to disappear that minority."

We can never forget what happened. We can never allow demagogues, racists, bullies to bring us down roads of darkness and evil. And they are out there.

Collections 26th January 2020

Offertory Collection:	€1410
Share Collection:	€ 997

Christian Meditation takes place every Thursday morning before 10.00am Mass in the Church. Meditation is the quiet prayer of faith, silence, stillness and simplicity handed on to us by the Benedictine Monk, John Main O.S.B. All are welcome

FIRST FRIDAY

Divine Mercy Devotions will take place this First Friday 7th February at 7pm to include Mass, Benediction, Chaplet, and Blessing with the Relic of St Faustina. Devotions will be followed by vigil.

The Annual Collection of ACCORD Dublin the Diocesan Agency for Marriage and the Family, will be taken up all Masses on the weekend of 15 & 16 February. The Collection for ACCORD will replace the usual Share Collection. ACCORD Dublin offers Marriage Preparation courses, counselling for couples and individuals experiencing difficulties in their relationships and a Relationship and Sexuality Programme for schools. ACCORD Dublin needs your support so please give generously if you can. For further information contact Linda Chambers by email: LChambers@accordublin.ie

Lent Book Club: This year's suggested book for Lent is; *Finding God in a Leaf* by Fr Brian Grogan SJ. Last year 36 parishes in the Diocese set up Book Clubs with great success during the season of Lent. If you are interested in gathering a parish group, to read together for this coming Lent - please come along to the training evening where guidelines and other advice on how to make the best use of the group will be given by Patricia Carroll of the Evangelisation and Ecumenism team in Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe Road, Dublin 3 from 7.30-9.30pm on the 11th February. Please register for this event by email to: mary.dent@dublindiocese.ie

Daily Eucharistic Adoration

Mon: 10.30am – 11.30am
Tues: 10.30am – 11.30am
Wed: 10.30am – 1.30pm
Thurs: 10.30am – 7.30pm
Fri: 10.30am – 11.30am
Sat: 10.30am – 4.30pm
Sun: 2.30pm – 5.30pm