

## Some observations from those attending

### NIGHT 1 in Kilrush – “Scripture as a Pathway to Faith”

- Most observations and comments focused on the New Testament
- Gerard’s exploration of the short passage in Luke 4 verses 16-21 (where Jesus speaks in his local synagogue about a passage from Isaiah) brought it to life- a passage often heard but never quite like this: “it touched a chord” – for the first time “it spoke to me”
- The Baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22) means so much to me; hearing the voice “You are my Son, my Beloved”, this speaks to me so that I, like Jesus, feel loved by God”
- Several references to parables of Jesus and stories about Jesus demand that we think about the point Jesus is making – in *The Prodigal Son* – did the Father really treat the older brother unfairly? In the *Workers in the Vineyard* parable, did the employer treat some employees unfairly by paying them all the same wage? If I am generous with you, could that be unfair to someone else?- *the calming of the storm* – for several people this is a reassurance of the presence of Jesus in difficult periods or occasions in our lives - *and the Transfiguration*: “I know how Peter felt wanting to hold on to that special moment – I was like that at the birth of my child: a miracle moment for me”
- Many other parables and passages were mentioned but these stood out – maybe showing our affinity for stories? Stories are a staple of both the Old and the New Testaments
- New Testament and the Psalms much more meaningful for us than the Old Testament – somehow they resonate more with us, are more relevant to our lives and our lived experience
- The Psalms, even though part of the Old Testament, are in a special place and they do link up with our lives in the experiences they relate and the feelings they convey
- Old Testament readings are often very dense (i.e. hard to understand) and we need background information and context so we can see their relevance – this is maybe especially true for young people
- To grasp the significance of Old Testament readings, real preparation is needed, and often the passage needs to be read more than once – here we see the real necessity of the priest’s homily to help us see for ourselves the deeper meaning of a passage so that we have something to take home with us: too often we have nothing to take home, we can’t see the relevance of the scripture
- The weekly parish newsletter always includes the Sunday scripture readings and these can be read a number of times during the week as a way of reading the Scriptures
- Age can bring maturity, and maturity leads us to listen and see more attentively, but for these events to happen we must actively listen and look, that is with the intention to hear and see what is in front of us: for this we need to seek out stillness and silence: “Be still and know that I am God...”