

5th Sunday of Lent – Mar 29, 2020

ST. MARY PARISH - NO MASSES

ST. PETER'S, Ayton - NO MASSES

ST. THOMAS, Harriston - NO MASSES

Pope Francis' Prayer to Our Lady, Health of the Sick

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.

*At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain,
with steadfast faith.*

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that,

as you did at Cana of Galilee,

joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,

to conform ourselves to the Father's will

and to do what Jesus tells us:

*He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us,
through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.*

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

*Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from
every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.*

- Pope Francis, March 2020

God's Word for

reflection

We must fast with our whole heart, that is to say, willingly, wholeheartedly, universally and entirely.

- St. Francis de Sales

PRAY FOR THE SICK

We pray for all our sick parishioners, especially Nellie Franco, Colleen McManus, Adell Mueller, Mary Carney, Dustin Purvis, Lucas Reinhart, Laura Walker, Bert Holmes, David McCarthy, Lonta Williams, Glen Wright, Bob McIntee.

DIOCESAN CALENDAR

Mon. – Rev. J. Michalski, S.Chr. **Tues.** –Rev. L. Amaszka
Wed. – Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph (C.S.J.)

- Heaven is filled with converted sinners of all kinds, and there is room for more.

- St. Joseph Cafasso

- I pray to God to give me perseverance and to deign that I be a faithful witness to him to the end of my life.

- St. Patrick

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (John 14:27).

“Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world.”

-Blessed Pope Pius IX

Please pray the Rosary for peace in our families!



First Reading

Ezekiel 37:12-14

God will open the graves and restore the people of Israel.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 130:1-8

With the Lord is forgiveness and mercy.

Second Reading

Romans 8:8-11

The Spirit of God dwells in you.

Gospel Reading

John 11:1-45 (shorter version John 11:3-7,17,20-27,33b-45)

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Our Gospel on this day, the fifth Sunday of Lent, is again taken from the Gospel according to John. The reading from John continues the break from Cycle A's focus on the Gospel of Matthew. Today's Gospel reading recounts another sign, or miracle, found in John's Gospel, the raising of Lazarus. As our catechumens move closer to the celebration of their Baptisms at the Triduum, today's reading invites us to reflect upon what it means to call Jesus the Resurrection and the life.

The context for the story of the raising of Lazarus is the Jewish leaders' growing animosity toward Jesus. Jesus has been in Jerusalem, taking part in the feast of the Dedication, which we have come to know as Hanukkah. The people have been pressing him to declare plainly whether he is the Messiah. Jesus tells them to look to his works, which testify to his coming from God. Many do not believe Jesus, however, and some try to stone him for blasphemy.

Into this scene of confrontation, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, send word to Jesus that his friend is ill. Jesus is said to love Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but he delays his journey for two days. The delay heightens the drama and shows Jesus' obedience to God, who is to be glorified through Lazarus's resurrection. When Jesus finally declares that he will journey to Bethany, his disciples fear for his life. Thomas declares that he and the other disciples should prepare to die with Jesus.

The scene described at Bethany is a sad one. Martha meets Jesus weeping and saying that if Jesus had been there, Lazarus would not have died. Yet she remains confident that God will do whatever Jesus asks. Martha affirms her

belief that there will be a resurrection of the dead in the last days. Then Martha's sister, Mary, comes to Jesus with the same confidence, saying that Jesus could have cured Lazarus. Jesus asks to be brought to Lazarus's tomb where he prays and calls Lazarus out from the tomb. At this sign, many come to believe in Jesus, but others take word of the miracle to the Jewish authorities, who begin their plans for Jesus' death.

Set against the backdrop of Jesus' impending death, many elements of the raising of Lazarus foreshadow the good news of Jesus' own Resurrection. Jesus, facing the conflict with the Jewish authorities, acts in complete obedience to God. In raising Lazarus, Jesus shows his power over death so that when Jesus dies, those who believe in him might remember that and take hope. Just as Jesus calls for the stone to be rolled away from Lazarus's tomb, so too will the disciples find the stone rolled away from Jesus' tomb.

With our catechumens preparing for their Baptism at Easter, the Gospel today calls us to reflect on Baptism as a dying and rising with Jesus. In Baptism we die to sin's power over us, rising as children of God. In Baptism we join ourselves with Christ, who conquered death once and for all so that we who believe in him may have eternal life. With Martha and Mary, we are called to profess our belief that Jesus is indeed the Resurrection and the life.

Family Connection

Jesus' promise of eternal life is a central element of our Catholic faith. Even though Easter is still two weeks away, our Gospel today invites us to acknowledge Jesus' power over death, evidenced in the raising of Lazarus, and to anticipate Jesus' conquering of death once and for all in his death and Resurrection. We sometimes use examples from nature to help describe this mystery of our faith. Jesus himself talked about the seed that dies when planted in the ground in order to produce new life (John 12:24). Using that image and others, we find hope and confidence in Jesus, the Resurrection and the life.

Gather your family today and read today's Gospel in its shorter form, John 11:3-7,17,20-27,33b-45. Write Jesus' promise from today's Gospel ("I am the resurrection and the life.") on a large sheet of white paper. As your family talks about what Jesus means by this promise, decorate Jesus' words with symbols that will remind you of his promise of eternal life. Display this reminder of Jesus' promise in a prominent place in your home and keep it there until Easter. Pray that you will always remain

confident in Jesus' promise of eternal life. Conclude by praying together the [Apostles' Creed](#) or the [Nicene Creed](#).

It is natural for us to feel afraid. God understands. There's a reason the Bible is filled with instances of him telling his people not to be afraid, because he knows we are human:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).