

Brothers and sisters in Christ, it is very sad indeed that the spread of the Covid-19 virus has forced the Federal and State Government to take drastic measures to ensure the safety of people and to contain the increasing number of infections that have been reported. These measures include the closure of all Churches and places where people gather. Consequently, Archbishop Fisher has announced that *all public Masses and other communal devotions, whether inside or outdoors, are suspended until further notice. This also includes private prayer in the Church.*

It is no longer permissible for me take communion to the sick and the homebound on a regular basis. However, should a parishioner who is gravely ill or dying require Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion, arrangements can be made by contacting me 0400 346 301.

We are all urged to stay home and to minimize all gatherings of people. If as a nation we are conscientious in following the current directions of the Government and Health authorities, we may be able to avoid an even tighter lockdown that would cause immense hardship for so many.

Because of the indefinite suspension of the public celebration of Masses and ceremonies in the Church, all the of the faithful are dispensed from the requirement to attend Sunday Mass, but you are encouraged to keep Sunday holy by setting aside time for prayer, reading the Scriptures of the day, and making a Spiritual Communion. In times of stress and danger, it has always been a Catholic tradition to seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Recitation of the Rosary is especially commended during these troubling times.

Once again, it is vitally important during this pandemic that we take heed of the instructions issued by the authorities, maintain good personal hygiene, avoid unnecessary travel and have regard to those members of our community who require assistance: the young, the elderly, the homeless, people with disabilities, the poor and the sick.

Sunday Mass for you at home is televised on Channel Ten on Sunday mornings at 6am.

The Australian Bishops have published a guide to praying at home during the period of isolation which can be accessed at <https://www.catholic.org.au/prayathome>

Daily Masses and Holy Week services will be celebrated privately at St. Mary's Cathedral and live-streamed or available on demand at <https://www.stmaryscathedral.org.au/>

I will be celebrating my Mass privately every day and offering it for your intentions.

With you always in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray for me. Fr. Paul

**Masses for Deceased and sick parishioners:** Elias Francis (ann ) Derice Mercer (1<sup>st</sup> ann.26/2)

## **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

**29 March 2020**

### **THE INTRODUCTORY RITES**

## **Entrance Antiphon**

Give me justice, O God,  
and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless.  
From the deceitful and cunning rescue me,  
for you, O God, are my strength.

## ***Introduction***

## **Penitential Act**

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.  
May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

## Collect

Let us pray.

*By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God  
may we walk eagerly in that same charity  
with which, out of love for the world,  
your Son handed himself over to death.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.*

Amen.

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### First Reading

Ezekiel 37:12-14

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

*I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.*

The Lord says this: I am going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this - it is the Lord who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 129

*With the Lord there is mercy*

*and fullness of redemption.*

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,  
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ear be attentive

to the voice of my pleading. **R.**

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,  
Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness:

for this we revere you. **R.**

My soul is waiting for the Lord,  
I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord

more than watchman for daybreak.

(Let the watchman count on daybreak

and Israel on the Lord.) **R.**

Because with the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption,

Israel indeed he will redeem

from all its iniquity. **R.**

## Second Reading

Romans 8:8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he will give life to your own mortal bodies.*

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation

John 11:25, 26

***Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!***

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;

whoever believes in me will not die for ever.

***Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!***

## Gospel

John 11:1-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

*I am the resurrection and the life.*

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. - It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' The disciples said, 'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?' Jesus replied:

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?

A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling  
because he has the light of this world to see by;  
but if he walks at night he stumbles,  
because there is no light to guide him.'

He said that and then added, 'Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.' The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by 'rest' he meant 'sleep', so Jesus put it plainly, 'Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.' Then Thomas - known as the Twin - said to the other disciples, 'Let us go too, and die with him.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.

If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,  
and whoever lives and believes in me  
will never die.

Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, 'The Master is here and wants to see you.' Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.

I knew indeed that you always hear me,  
but I speak

for the sake of all these who stand round me,  
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**LAZARUS:** The raising of Lazarus from his grave was both a miracle and a parable. It was a miracle of compassion as Christ's tears revealed. Why did Christ weep? Not, as we might do, because of the death of a friend that we would not see any longer, but because of the sorrow brought upon those he loved. The Gospel tells us that "Jesus loved Mary and her sister Martha". His tears were a reaction to theirs. At the same time, there were tears tempered by joy like sunshine amid rain. He knew that life was to rise out of death. Soon their dead brother would be restored to them. "I am the Resurrection and the Life", he said.

All of us are identified with Lazarus. He is the parable of our lives. Like him we will be pulled back from the tomb. Christ is the vital spark who ignites the immortal flame in us. Death and resurrection are the lot of all Christians. "If you believe in me", he said, "you will never die." To many, life is simply a process from birth to dust; to the Christian it is a journey from earth to eternity. Lazarus was already, according to the onlooker, in process of corruption leading to complete dissolution into dust. We too like him return to the dust from which we were made, but Christ will take hold of the dust; his splendour and power will raise it up to share his glory. Just as he died and rose again so will we, united with him, rise in glory.

What were the feelings of Lazarus after his resurrection? How did he view the world? We do not know, but surely this much is certain, he saw its divine proportions much more clearly. He must have had a new vision of life. Some part of this vision must be with every Christian whom Christ has risen from the state of sin. Sin is a kind of death and Christ alone can give new life.

## APOSTLES' CREED

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered upon Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.*

## UNIVERSAL PRAYER FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT.

*As the time of Christ's suffering and death draws nearer, let us ask the Father to lead us through the dark moments of the Passover of his Son to the glory of resurrection.*

1. That wherever the power of death holds people bound, the Church may summon forth life in the name of Christ. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
2. That the judgment of this world may herald justice for the oppressed. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
3. That those who mourn may be consoled in their grief by the Lord who wept for Lazarus his friend. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
4. That, in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist, the elect will experience Christ, who calls them to life, unbinds them and lets them go free. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
5. That through penance and reconciliation, this assembly may be raised from the grave and filled with God's spirit. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
6. That those who have been affected by tropical cyclone "Debbie" and those devastated by floods in the aftermath be assured of our concern, our prayers and practical assistance: May Emergency Services be aided in their rescue efforts and their valuable work to bring essential services back on track. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
7. That the faithful who have gone to their rest may hear the voice of Jesus calling them forth to life and resurrection. *Let us pray to the Lord.*
8. That the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of all Consolation, assist us now and at the hour of our death. **HAIL MARY.**

*We beseech you, Almighty God, to look upon the heartfelt prayers of a humble and penitent people, and stretch forth the right hand of your Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.*

## **PRAYER AMID THE CURRENT PANDEMIC**

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, amid the global spread of the Coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from pride and complacency which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

O Healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died.

Be with doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks.

Whether we are at home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering of this illness or only a few, be with us Lord as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace. You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. AMEN.

## **PRAYER OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You have already come and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be *etc.*

