

**29 March 2020**  
**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

**OPENING HYMN**

*Faith in God can move the mountains,  
Trust in Him can calm the sea.  
He's my fortress, He's my stronghold,  
He's the rock who rescues me.*

Lord, you are my refuge  
Never let me be ashamed.  
In your justice, rescue me,  
Turn to me and hear my prayer.

You are my salvation  
From oppression set me free.  
Ever since my childhood,  
You have been my only hope.

Bitter troubles burden me,  
But you fill me with new life.  
From the grave you raise me up,  
So my tongue will sing your praise.

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*

**OPENING PRAYER**

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.

**FIRST READING:** Ezekiel 17:12-14

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Psalm 130

**Response:** With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;  
LORD, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive  
to my voice in supplication. **R/**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,  
LORD, who can stand?  
But with you is forgiveness,  
that you may be revered. **R/**

I trust in the LORD;  
my soul trusts in his word.  
More than sentinels wait for the dawn,  
let Israel wait for the LORD. **R/**

For with the LORD is kindness  
and with him is plenteous redemption;  
And he will redeem Israel  
from all their iniquities. **R/**

**SECOND READING:** Romans 8:8-11

**GOSPEL:**John 11:1-45

### **REFLECTION**

How do we prepare our life and follow Jesus to the eternity of heaven?

According to prophet Ezekiel, we must trust the Lord. He reminds us never to abandon the Lord like the Israelites and thus become hopeless. He says that even if the bones dry up and the breath is gone, if we obey the words of the Lord, He will put His spirit within us, and thus we shall live again (Ezekiel 37:11-14).

St. Paul reinforces for us that the best way to please God is to follow the spirit of God instead of the flesh. He says that if the Spirit of God dwells in us, our mortal bodies will have life again.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus restores Lazarus' life after he had been dead for four days. How can these readings help us to understand death and what lies beyond death?

As followers of Jesus, we believe in the resurrection of the dead; that death is not the end of everything. Rather, it is just a passage into eternal life and that the life hereafter is only a continuation of this life. But this life after death could be ours only on one condition, namely, to believe in Jesus, "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

**Leader:** 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 his Resurrection.

**Our response is:** Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church, the Body of Christ: may she continue to proclaim, in season and out of season, the saving power of Christ's resurrection, by which we are raised from the death of sin to the new life of grace: (pause) ...Lord hear us.

For those who hold public office: may they appreciate the passing value of the things of this world and realise the immortal destiny of each person, a destiny won for us by Christ's

saving death and resurrection: (pause) ... Lord hear us.

May those who suffer and are in sorrow believe that through faith, all suffering borne for Christ's sake, is taken up into his resurrection. May we never lose sight of the fact that the Cross is buried in the glory of the empty tomb: (pause) ... Lord hear us.

We pray for all Christians everywhere: may we die to selfishness every day and be united with Christ, who gave himself up for us on the Cross so that he might be our new life: (pause) ... Lord hear us.

**Leader:** Father, hear the prayers of your Church. Bring forth to resurrection the people who trust in your promises. We ask this, through Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen

**Leader:** At the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, we dare to say:  
*(All say the Lord's Prayer together)* Our Father, ...

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

### **PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS**

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **CLOSING HYMN**

We see the troubles in our lives,  
We wonder why things are this way  
Why is there pain? Why is there loneliness?  
Is there one who can help us in our need?

*Look up to the Lord, put your hope in the Saviour  
He showed us that to live we first must die.  
Look up to the Lord, put your hope in the Saviour,  
The darkness of his death has turned to light!*

Life can be difficult at times,  
The answers may seem far away:  
Why is there hate? Why is there selfishness?  
Is there one who overcame this strife?

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*