



During Lent we shall be reciting the Rosary prior to the 10.00 am Sunday Mass. So please aim to be seated by 9.45 a.m if possible

The English Speaking Roman Catholic Community on Gozo  
Patron Saint – St. Thomas More  
Our website: www.esccgozo.org  
Seminary guest WiFi: Letmein123!  
Sacred Heart Seminary Chapel – Enrico Mizzi Street , Victoria

22nd March 2026  
5th Sunday Lent  
Celebrated by  
Fr. George Debrincat

*Restoration to life*



**Gospel Acclamation**

Glory and praise to you Lord Jesus Christ!

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will never die.

Glory and praise to you Lord Jesus Christ!

**First Reading Ezekiel 37:12-14**

The Lord says this: I am now 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*

♪ Hymns for Today ♪

- 633 Seek Ye First The Kingdom Of God
- 383 Lord Jesus Christ
- 272 I Am The Bread Of Life

**Second Reading Romans 8:8-11**

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*

**Responsorial Psalm 29(130)**

**(R 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 ears 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 day-break.  
(Let the watchman count on day-break 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)

**Message from Audrey Pace**

Hi Johanna, I wonder if you could thank the community for the delicious gift of my birthday cake plus the many prayers and love from everyone for my 90th birthday. I especially appreciate the mass being offered for me by Fr. Loreto . Though I am unable to get to the seminary my heart will always be there. God bless you all.

**Gospel**

**See Over**

**Memorial Acclamation**  
We proclaim your Death, O Lord and profess your Resurrection until you come again

**We Pray For**  
Those in our community and all our relatives and friends who need our prayers as well as those who have died

**Communion Reflection**

*From Pope Leo's Lenten message 2026*

As a visible sign of our inner commitment to turn away from sin and evil with the help of grace, fasting must also include other forms of self-denial aimed at helping us to acquire a more sober lifestyle, since "austerity alone makes the Christian life strong and authentic." In this regard, I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.

**Gospel****John 11:1-45**

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.



After listening to today's readings let us now consider the following :

**Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.**

This is the third of the great Johannine gospel readings on the Sundays of Lent which lead up to and prepare us for the baptisms of the new members of Christ at the Easter Vigil; today's gospel grips us with the story of Jesus' gift of life to his friend Lazarus. This is not the same thing as the gift of life to us by Jesus in the resurrection, for Lazarus returns to ordinary human life, and will die again, whereas the Christian resurrection transforms us into a new way of life, giving us a life which is a participation in the divine life for ever. Rather, the resurrection of Lazarus is the last and greatest of Jesus' signs, his marvellous works which point towards and hint at this final gift of divine life. The first of the signs was the transformation of the water of the Law into the wine of the messianic wedding banquet at Cana. These signs show who Jesus really is. As well as showing the divine power of Jesus - for only God can give life - they also show the real, human love of Jesus for his friends. He is upset by Lazarus' death and weeps for him, sharing the human sorrow of his family as he shares our sorrows too. Is death something to fear?

**And that of Fr. Robert Draper**

The link between the first reading from the Old Testament and the Gospel today is empathic. We are often given reading from the prophets that echo the action of Jesus in the Gospel - but today's is striking. Through Ezekiel the Lord promises resurrection for his people, in the Gospels we see it enacted at the command of God through Jesus' prayer. Yet for catechetical reasons the focus on the Gospel is in fact Martha and Mary - especially Martha (the picture of whom can often be stuck as the image of her in Luke's Gospel). If we remember that for John the great acts of Jesus are never called miracles, but only signs, and if we contemplate the Gospels of the last two weeks, we can see that what John is asking of us here is not to be amazed by Jesus' act, but to recognise how people come to faith. In different Gospels there are different professions of faith by disciples and Gentiles and others, but Martha's is well worth noting. Her profession comes before the action - and her initial response to Jesus 'If you had been here... suggests one who didn't fully realise who the Lord is, and yet once the Lord has spoken his words of assurance to her she is able to make one of the most total professions of faith in Jesus in the all the Gospels. Martha and Mary discover that to encounter the Lord is to encounter the one who has the power to 'open your graves my people'. The one who having risen enables all who believe to rise from the dead like Lazarus, that is the one the Church invites the catechumens to meet this Easter.

**Pope Leo XIV's prayer intention for March**

**For disarmament and peace**

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead

**DIARY**

**Sunday 29 March 11.30am** Silesian Choir from Poland will sing the Coronation mass at English mass in Sannat parish church.

**Friday 3 April** Pilgrimage to visit 7 churches at 9am. Bus available at Bus Terminal in Victoria. Return at 12.30pm. €3 donation.

**9th April 2026 3.30 pm** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in English at Ghasri church followed by refreshments.

**HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

**2nd April Maundy Thursday**  
**Washing of feet 5.00 pm**  
**3rd April Good Friday 3.00 pm**  
**4th April Easter Vigil 8.00 pm**  
**5th April Easter Sunday 10.00 am**

**Volunteers for washing of feet please.**



**Money Matters**

The collection for last Sunday was € 170.80 All monies collected are deployed to cover the costs of running our community and for good causes

**Celebrations in March**

**Birthdays**

24th Eileen Davie  
 27th Lesley Dando

**Anniversaries**

30th Audrey & John Pace

**Eucharistic Ministers**

<b>22-Mar-26</b>	<b>Iain Dando</b>	<b>Ben Miltenburg &amp; DFP</b>
29-Mar-26	Monique Sant Georges	David Felice Pace
05-Apr-26	Mary Newman	Johanna Marks
12-Apr-26	Iain Dando	Ben Miltenburg
19-Apr-26	David Felice Pace	Mary Newman

**Readers Rota – If you would like to join please contact Johanna on johannamarks3@gmail.com**

<b>22-Mar Readings</b>	<b>Andy Young</b>	<b>Prayers</b>	<b>Stella Woodgate</b>
29-Mar Readings	Stella Woodgate	Prayers	Angelika Camilleri
05-Apr Readings	Angelika Camilleri	Prayers	John Attard
12-Apr Readings	John Attard	Prayers	Johanna Marks
19-Apr Readings	Johanna Marks	Prayers	Mary Newman
26-Apr Readings	Mary Newman	Prayers	Stella Woodgate

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**Mary Newman 77047872**

**Would you like to join us on the Council and help in running our community?**

**Contact johannamarks3@gmail.com**