

Fifth Sunday in Lent A



Entrance Antiphon: **Give us 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.**

Our belief in the resurrection and everlasting life is the cornerstone of our faith. As we celebrate our Eucharist today, we recall Christ's death and resurrection and pray that we may come to share in eternal life.

God revealed his love for us in raising Christ from the dead. Let us turn to the Lord of Life and confess our sins and failings.

Lord Jesus, you restore the dead to life. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you free us from the bonds of sin. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the resurrection and the life. Lord, have mercy.

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.**

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

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 God who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Psalm 129

**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!

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 daybreak.

R/.

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

R/.

SECOND READING

A reading from St Paul's letter to the Romans

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.

Thanks be to God.

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

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

whoever believes in me will never die. Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

GOSPEL

John 8: 1-7. 17. 20-7. 33-45

The Lord be with you

And with your spirit.

A reading from the Gospel according to John

Glory to you Lord.

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, Martha and Mary, 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 Judea".

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. 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".

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 know 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.

The 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 under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the 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.

Offertory:

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Gifts:

Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of this sacrifice. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Preface:

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**And with your spirit.
We lift them up to the Lord.
It is right and just.**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Christ our Lord.

For as true man he wept for Lazarus his friend
and as eternal God raised him from the tomb,
just as, taking pity on the human race,
he leads us by sacred mysteries to new life.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty
and rejoices in your presence for ever.

May our voices, we pray, join with theirs
in one chorus of exultant praise, we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The mystery of faith. **When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.**

Communion Antiphon: **Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.**

REFLECTION

I believe in death. I believe that it is part of life. I believe that we are born to die, to die that we may live more fully ... born to die a little each day to selfishness, to pretence, and to sin. I believe that every time we pass from one stage of life to another, something in us dies and something new is born. I believe we taste death in moments of loneliness, rejection, sorrow, disappointment, and failure. I believe that we are dying before our time when we live in bitterness, in hatred, and in isolation. I believe that each day we are creating our own death by the way we live.

For those with faith, death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.

Prayer after Communion:

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. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

The Lord be with you:

May almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

And with your spirit.

Amen.

Thanks be to God.

We pray, Lord, for those who commit evil with no sense of wrongdoing, no concept of sin, no hint of remorse, no sign of scruples. Help them to glimpse what is right and good, and to be touched by your re-
newing transforming grace.