



The Catholic Parish of Pittwater

Sacred Heart & Maria Regina. Neighbourhoods of Grace, entrusted to the care of the Salvatorians.

*Pope Francis'
Prayer to Mary
during the
coronavirus pandemic*

O Mary, you always shine
on our path as a sign of
salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to
you, Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part
in Jesus' pain,
keeping your faith firm.
You, Salvation of all People,
know what we need, and
we are sure you will
provide so that,
as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and
to feasting after this
time of trial.

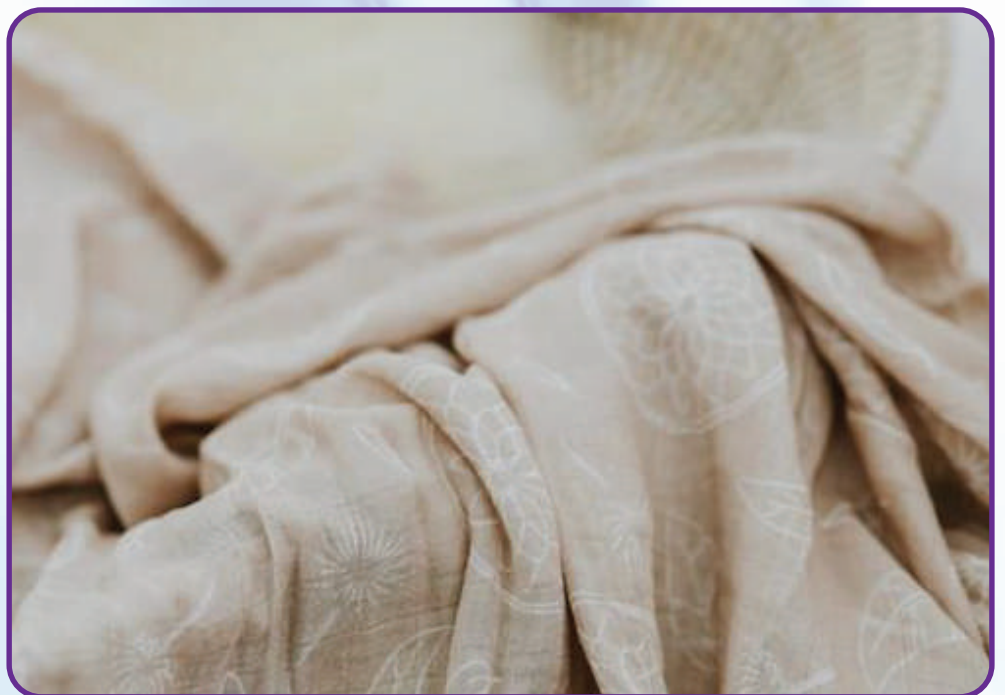
Help us, Mother of Divine
Love, to conform
to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told
by Jesus, who has taken
upon himself our sufferings
and carried our sorrows
to lead us, through the
cross, to the joy
of the resurrection.

Amen.



Thoughts of Fr Francis Jordan

If you could not preach at all with words, example alone is already
a mighty sermon that would capture the spectator.



27 March 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Since last weekend, further government restrictions have been put in place in an attempt to limit the transmission of the COVID-19 coronavirus, which has forced us to close our Churches until further notice and meaning that we are unable to keep our Churches open for private prayer and personal devotion.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo's latest letter to the people of the Diocese of Broken Bay (dated 23 March 2020) responding to these further restrictions can be found on our website www.pittwaterparish.org

During this time when the Church is cooperating with the authorities to ensure the safety of us all, I want to reassure you we will do our best to keep in touch with you and continue to keep you in our prayers and to pray for all those in need.

continued next page...

Fr Richard and myself continue to be available to offer you the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to anoint the sick. Please arrange a time for these Sacraments through the parish office.

Also, as mentioned previously, Fr Richard, Bishop Bernard and myself will continue to celebrate the Holy Mass privately and are still ready and willing to serve you. Any scheduled Mass intentions will be fulfilled in this way. Therefore, if you would like to offer a Mass intention, such as for someone who is sick, recently deceased, deceased anniversary or any other special intention, you can organise these through our parish office. We will of course, keep you, our valued parishioners, in our prayers constantly and as the parish priest, I will continue to fulfil my obligation to celebrate one Mass on the weekend for you, the parishioners entrusted in my pastoral care.

Let us not forget that buildings are closed, not the Church. We are the Church. And we remain open in faith, hope and love.

All of us can pray the Rosary and other prayers regularly either individually or with our families. We will continue to alert you to the times that The Holy Father and the Bishops Conference are announcing that we might pray together, as they are provided to us.

Along with the Mass on Demand link provided to you in our last parish bulletin (<https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews>) "Mass for You at Home" is broadcast on Channel 10 each Sunday from 6am.

Some pastoral resources for you and your family can be found in this weekend's bulletin. Printed copies of the bulletin are available outside our Maria Regina Church, Avalon or the front of the parish office, Mona Vale and are available on our website <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/pittwater/news-events/bulletins>

We are also working on ways that we can livestream the parish Masses and especially concentrating on bringing the parish celebrations of the liturgical mysteries of the Paschal Triduum (Mass of the Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter) and will give you the details of how you can participate as soon as they are available.

The Catholic Weekly has temporarily halted printing and is publishing online in the interim so that you can stay up to date and informed with developments on all local, national, and international Catholic news by going to their website www.catholicweekly.com.au

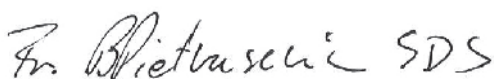
Our parish office remains open at this time. Please do not hesitate to contact the parish staff if you need any support or assistance during these challenging times. We are available to assist you.

Although we may long to be united with others, I encourage you to listen to the advice being given by our leaders, so that hopefully we can limit the spread of the virus.

Thank you for including us in your prayers, for your kind words, emails and your friendship in what is for us a difficult time as well. We are also very grateful for your donations which continue to financially support our parish and for your understanding of the current ever-changing situation.

As our parish, is entrusted to the care of the Salvatorians, we pray to the founder of the Salvatorians, Fr Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, and also to St Mary of the Cross Mackillop, our first Australian Saint, to intercede for our parish, for our country and for our world in this time of pandemic.

Yours in Jesus Christ our Saviour,



Fr Bronek Pietrusewicz SDS
Parish Priest



Vinnies
changes
lives
everyday.

Show your support and
give to our annual appeal



"TINNIES FOR VINNIES"

Thank you to our generous parishioners for their past donations to 'Tinnies for Vinnies'. By your generosity, our stockpile is overflowing. As such, we will not be needing anything for the month of March. You make a difference in the lives of our clients.

Sue Bowra

For the needy, help is
available by contacting
the Brookvale Centre
9905 0424 during
business hours.

Did you know that if you are new to
our parish you can register your
details through our website or if
your contact details have changed
you can update them.

Simply go to
www.pittwaterparish.org, click on
the "Welcome" menu item and
select "Parishioner Registration"
from the dropdown menu.
If you have any problems, please
contact the parish office on
9157 0999.

BOOK REVIEW

Praying with Therese of Lisieux

by Joseph F. Schmidt, FSC

Therese knew that God led
her, with all her inadequacies,
to holiness. She assures us
that God can do the same for
us. So, pray with her.



We Pray for

Recently Deceased
Pave Lucic
Laura De Santis

Anna Maria (Mia)
Van den Elzen

If you would like the names of your
relatives or friends and offerings
included, please drop the envelope in
to the Parish Office by Midday on
Wednesdays. Thank You.

Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them
O Lord, And Let Perpetual Light
Shine Upon Them.

May they Rest in Peace. Amen.
May Their Souls And The Souls
Of The Faithful Departed,
Through The Mercy Of God,
Rest In Peace. Amen.

Deceased Anniversary

Jack Favaloro

Special Intention

Vanessa Rettura

Prayers for the Sick

Tayla Riddle
Giovanni Returra
Bill Eyre
Manny Zarb
Philip Maddrell
Gail Reiher
Imelda Vince
Eric Domagas
Vicky Villaluz
Ben Castillo
Moirra Howie
Carol Brennan
Jomar
Christine Hills
Ross Perkins
Donald McRae
Mary O'Connor
Sara Zofrea
Beryl Peo-Duncan
Joe Romeo

The names on this list will be
removed after four weeks unless
otherwise requested or advised.
Thank you

LIBRARY

The books which are reviewed here each
week are from our Parish Library situated
at Maria Regina Church, Avalon.
The Library is opened at Maria Regina
Church, Avalon before and after the
weekend Masses, Saturday 6 pm and
Sunday 9 am, and on week day Masses,
except Tuesdays, at 9.15 am. You can
browse our full collection of books and
DVDs on the Parish website. Go to
Resources > Library > Our books If these
hours don't suit you and you would like
to borrow or have an inquiry you may
phone me on 99183973 (Home)
0401613643 (mobile).

Trish Newman



THANK YOU

I wish to take this opportunity
to say thank you for your
contributions and support
throughout the year. Your
financial contributions in our
Planned Giving Programme
and your generous donations
throughout the year to
Charitable Works Fund are
greatly appreciated.
I also wish to extend a warm
welcome to any new
parishioners to Pittwater
Parish.

Fr Bronek SDS
Parish Priest

A beautiful message from Holy Father Pope
Francis: he says, "Rivers do not drink their
own water; trees do not eat their own fruit;
the sun does not shine on itself and flowers
do not spread their fragrance for
themselves. Living for others is a rule of
nature. We are all born to help each other.
No matter how difficult it is... Life is good
when you are happy; but much better when
others are happy because of you." Let us all
remember then that every changing colour
of a leaf is beautiful and every changing
situation of life is meaningful, both need
very clear vision. So do not grumble or
complain, let us instead remember that
Pain is a sign that we are alive, Problems are
a sign that we are strong and Prayer is a
sign we are not alone!! If we can
acknowledge these truths and condition
our hearts and minds, our lives will be more
meaningful, different and worthwhile!!



Daylight saving will
end at 3am on
Sunday,
5 April 2020
when clocks go back
one hour.

Watch the daily Mass on
Demand at

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews>

We hope that this will
help the faithful to
celebrate the Holy Mass
online wherever they are



If you are experiencing
Domestic Violence.

Ring 1800 RESPECT
1800 737 732



SAFEGUARDING

We the people of the Catholic Diocese
of Broken Bay and the Catholic Parish
of Pittwater are committed to fostering
communities of safety and care for all
people, especially for children and
others in the community who are
vulnerable. Our commitment is
underscored by our faith in Jesus Christ.



Easter Cards are now available for
purchase from **Aid to the Church in
Need**. Each packet contains 12 Easter
cards and envelopes. Cost: First packet
\$23 (includes postage). Extra packets
\$15 each.

The Easter cards feature the religious
paintings of Swiss artist, Bradi Barth
and include a bible verse inside.
Proceeds raised go toward ACN
projects that support the Church
where she is unable to support
herself. Order over the phone: 1800
101 201 or online:
www.aidtochurch.org

PARISH DIRECTORY**Pittwater Parish**

1 Keenan Street Mona Vale NSW 2103

Tel 9157 0999 • Fax 9012 0509

www.pittwaterparish.org**Parish Priest**

Fr Bronek Pietrusewicz SDS

Tel 9157 0999 ext 0

pp@pittwaterparish.org**Assistant Priest**

Fr Richard Sadowski SDS

Tel 9157 0999 ext 0

ap@pittwaterparish.org**Bishop - Emeritus**

Bishop Bernard O'Grady op

Tel 9157 0999 ext 20

Parish Secretary

Suzy Caruso

Tel 9157 0999 ext 0

office@pittwaterparish.org**Administrative Assistant**

Angela Smit

Tel 9157 0999 ext 0

office@pittwaterparish.org**Youth Director**

Josh Willard (Soul Youth)

music@pittwaterparish.org**Music Director**

Josh Willard

Tel 9157 0999 ext 17

music@pittwaterparish.org**Media & Communication**

Laura Ee

Tel 9157 0999 ext 31

media@pittwaterparish.org**Sacramental Program**

Suzy Caruso

Tel 9157 0999 ext 13

sacraments@pittwaterparish.org**Parish Office Hours**

Monday to Thursday

9.00am to 4.00pm

Friday 9am to 12 noon

Sacred Heart Church

1 Keenan Street Mona Vale

Maria Regina Church

7 Central Road Avalon

Mona Vale**Sacred Heart School**

Tel 9999 3264

Principal: Mrs Suellen Garey

Avalon**Maria Regina School**

Tel 9918 2608

Principal: Mrs Kathy Gee

Warriewood**Mater Maria Catholic College**

Tel 9997 7044

Principal: Mr Marc Reicher

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**
GO FURTHER TOGETHER **Caritas**
AUSTRALIA

Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl, living with a disability. She lives in a village in northern Malawi in a region plagued by food insecurity and poverty. For most of her life, her parents have struggled to put meals on the table. Tawonga often had to miss school because she was too sick from hunger. The family also faced discrimination in their community due to her disability. Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed. Her family now grows enough food to provide three meals a day, ending the struggle of malnutrition, and helping her thrive at school.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to so this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them.

Let's Go Further, Together. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

The Parish is working on getting Mass to you LIVE.

In the meantime, you can Watch the daily Mass on Demand at

[https://www.youtube.com/](https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews)

[user/cathnews](https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews)

Please check our website

www.pittwaterparish.org or our facebook page

for updates.

PLANNED GIVING

The money contributed to our parish via our second collection helps us to meet the running costs which our Parish incurs, including wages, electricity, telephones, insurances, rates, building and equipment repairs and maintenance, to name but a few. As we are unable to donate via our second collection at present, our parish will not receive the funds which are truly needed to cover our relentless stream of expenses. Whilst you are unable to attend Mass, if you are able to make your regular donation by way of automatic direct debit from your credit card, please complete the form included in this bulletin. If you would prefer not to give by credit card, please contact the parish office for other ways that you can contribute.



YOU made the whole world stop spinning for awhile,
YOU silenced the noise that we all have created
YOU made us bend our knees again and ask for a miracle.
YOU closed Your churches so we will realise how dark our world without You in it.
YOU humble the proud and powerful.
The economy is crashing, businesses are closing.

We were very proud, we thought that everything we have, everything we possess was the result of our hardwork. We have forgotten that it was always Your grace and mercy that made us who we are.

We're like running in circles looking for some cure to this disease but in fact it takes humility to ask for Your wisdom.

We've been living our lives like we will be here on earth forever, like there's no heaven.

Maybe these trials are Your mercy in disguise.

Maybe this virus is actually Your way of purifying us, cleansing our soul, bringing us back to YOU.

.. In the past you serenaded us with Hosea's song:

**"Come back to me
with all your heart
Don't let fear keep us apart
Trees do bend though
straight and tall
So must we to others' call
Long have I waited for
Your coming home to me
And living deeply our new lives"**

You have been patiently waiting for us. We're so sorry for ignoring Your voice. For our selfish ways. We all deserve this. We have forgotten You dear Father.

.. We've forgotten that You're God, You only need to say the words and our souls shall be healed.



The Catholic Parish of Pittwater

Sacred Heart & Maria Regina. Neighbourhoods of Grace, entrusted to the care of the Salvatorians.

Planned Giving Direct Debit Agreement Form for Contributions Via Credit Card

☐ I am an existing Planned Giving contributor

☐ I am new to Planned Giving

Full Name			
Address:			
Telephone:		Email:	

Payment Agreement

<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
Debit Amount:	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Until Further Notice

Debit from Credit Card

Card Number:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Card Holder Name:					<input type="checkbox"/> Visa				<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard				
Expiry Date:					/				CCV:		<input type="text"/>		

This authorisation is to remain in force until notice is received in writing for it to be changed.

Signatory of Nominated Account:		Date:	/	/
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Thank you for supporting our planned giving programme.

Please return the completed form to the parish office or email to office@pittwaterparish.org

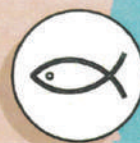
Terms and Conditions

I/We hereby authorise The Catholic Parish of Pittwater to debit my/our credit card account. Monthly debits occur on the 15th day of each month or the next business day. Weekly and fortnightly debits occur on the Monday of each week or fortnight accordingly. The administration of this agreement is conducted by The Catholic Parish of Pittwater. The Catholic Parish of Pittwater will not change the amount or frequency of drawing arrangements without my prior approval. It is my responsibility to ensure that I/We have sufficient clear funds in our nominated account to enable the direct debit to be honoured by our financial institution. If the Debit request falls on a weekend or public holiday, it will be processed on the next working day. I/We are advised to verify account details against a recent bank statement and if uncertain to contact our financial institution or The Catholic Parish of Pittwater. If our Direct Debit is dishonoured or returned by our financial institution, for any reason, The Catholic Parish of Pittwater reserves the right to re-present the Direct Debit for processing again on the next business day. The Catholic Parish of Pittwater will keep the information about our nominated account at the financial institution private and confidential unless this information is required to investigate a claim made in relation to an alleged incorrect or wrongful debt, or otherwise required by law. I/We may stop, cancel, alter or defer your Direct Debit Request at any time, by contacting The Catholic Parish of Pittwater I/we agree to notify The Catholic Parish of Pittwater if the account is closed.



WELCOME TO THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT,

where we read the story of Jesus raising his friend, Lazarus, from the dead. Mary, Martha and all those around felt hopeless at the death of Lazarus however, it all changes once they call on Jesus. Let us turn to Christ in hope and continue to call on him during these unprecedented times and know that he walks with us always.



READING SUNDAY'S GOSPEL – JOHN 11: 1-45

John 11: 25-26

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?'

Read the full text at
<https://universalis.com/20200329/mass.htm>
**REFLECTION:**

"Come out!" [Jesus] says to us, "Come out!". It is an invitation to true freedom, to allow ourselves to be seized by these words of Jesus who repeats them to each one of us today."

(Pope Francis, Angelus 6 April 2014)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Loyola Press – Arts and Faith:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent/arts-and-faith-for-lent/cycle-a/arts-and-faith-week-5-of-lent-cycle-a>

SONG: You came – Amanda Cook:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUMwoyK9dCU>

THIS WEEK:

Think of someone who may feel lonely during this period of self-isolation. Reach out with a phone call to see how they are and if there is anything you can do for them at this time.

**PRAYER:**

Pope Francis Prayer to Mary during the COVID-19 Pandemic

O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you,
Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. **Amen.**

**SAINT OF THE WEEK:****Francis of Paola, Feast Day: 2 April**

Living from 1416-1507, St Francis of Paola, a Franciscan friar, established a new order of friars devoting themselves to lives hidden from the world and praying for its salvation, along with a lifestyle of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Let us ask St Francis of Paola to be with us, as we, though not by choice, find ourselves living lives more hidden from the world.

CHILDREN'S RESOURCES:

Saddleback Kids – Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dca8SSxXCmM>

Catholic Mom – Catholic Gospel Activities:
<http://catholicmom.com/kids/catholic-gospel-coloring-worksheets-sunday-mass/>

F N I K T W E I X L G T O M B
X Y K S C Q E S F O E D Z N R
P R A Y E D P C F V R E E E D
B K Q W E S I I A E C A H V X
G L F K K N N P O A V T C V R
R L A Z U K G L G T O H G A E
I W O H F E E E Z R R H H V R
S F C R X J W S B J T T E S A
E H W Y Y N Y B N S R I U W A
L W B P O M A R Y A L S H M K
G C Q L W H J S M E E R A X G
B H A E U U Q H B J S I C K V

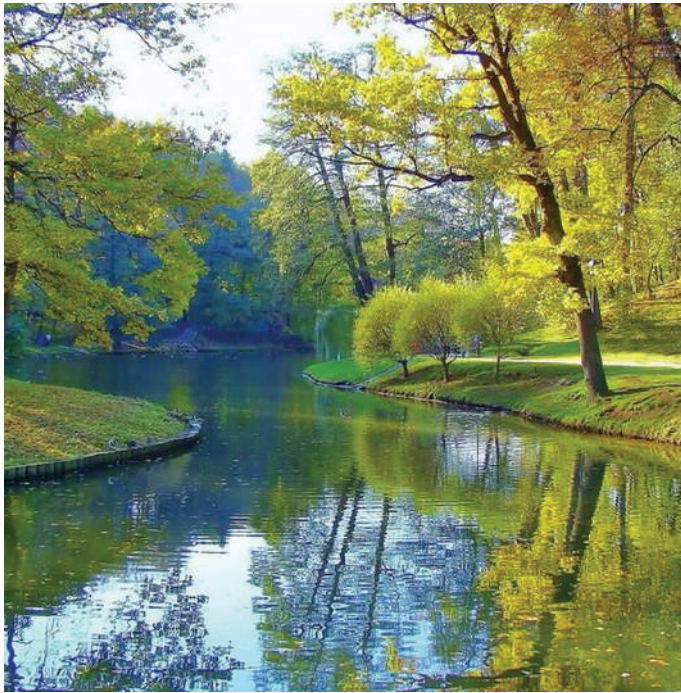


MARY	WAKE	SICK	LAZARUS	BROTHER
JESUS	STONE	DISCIPLES	LIFE	BELIEVE
PRAYED	WEeping	GLORY	MARTHA	RISE
ENTRANCE	LOVE	DEATH	TOMB	SLEEP

https://sermons4kids.com/jesus_raises_lazarus_wordsearch.htm

The Gift of Contemplative Prayer by Margaret Silf

Probably most of us, if we think of contemplative prayer at all, regard it as something that is beyond us and practiced only by a few contemplative monks and nuns whose whole lives are devoted to prayer. Yet I have heard respected and experienced spiritual guides say that contemplation is often given to those you would least expect—to harassed mothers and people who think they can't pray, to children, to the sick and dying, to people with no head learning about prayer or Scripture or theology. God sometimes seems to speak, heart to heart, in this mysterious way, to the untaught and unpracticed. None of us should imagine that the ways of contemplative prayer are closed to us, because God is always infinitely larger than our expectations.



I suggest that creation itself gives us a gateway. In every moment of our lives, a silent, invisible miracle of exchange is taking place. We breathe out the air that our bodies no longer need, which is mainly carbon dioxide, a waste product for us but the very thing that the green leaves on the trees and plants need to produce their own energy. So they receive our carbon dioxide and, through the process of photosynthesis, produce not only their own life energy, but also oxygen—a waste product for them, but the very thing we need to live. Whenever I stop my busyness for a few moments to look around me, I am amazed at this arrangement, and it makes me think of prayer.

So perhaps a good way to open our hearts up to the gift of contemplation is simply to become still, and, quite literally, to breathe out our waste—all that clogs us and deadens us—and to breathe in God's renewing life, as we breathe in the fresh oxygen that the plants have made for us. This simple, deliberate breathing exercise can become something like what the French peasant was doing as he looked at God and God looked at him. We are becoming aware of the mysterious exchange of life between ourselves and God. And there is no reason that any period of quiet might not become prayer of this kind.

There may be other creatures who can help you cross the threshold of

contemplation. If there is a baby in the family, try simply holding her in your arms as she sleeps and letting God hold both of you in his. Nothing more. No deep thoughts. No search for meaning. Just be there.

A cat (if you are not allergic to them!) can also be a great aid to prayer. My own cat loves to sleep round my neck. At first I found this disturbing, but when he has settled into a particular hollow (perhaps where he can feel my pulse), he will lie there, quite still, just purring deeply, until he falls asleep and the purring ceases. When he does this, I let myself find a hollow close to God's pulse, and let my own prayer become just a sleepy purr and then the silence of content. Or you might discover prayer on a park bench. The other day I was in Hyde Park, and I spent a few minutes listening to the deep-throated cooing of the pigeons. I wanted to join them, because, in their way, they were engaged in contemplative prayer, simply expressing, in this peaceful murmur, the song of their beings.

In your own home, prayer awaits you in the opening of a flower, the rising of your bread dough, or the steady, imperceptible development of a child. Spend time in silence, aware of the wonder that is being unfolded in your cakes and your children, your houseplants or your garden. For this is the essence of contemplative prayer—simple awareness, allowing God to be God, without trying to put the limitations of shape or meaning around him.



Contemplation, like all prayer, is pure gift, and not anything we can achieve. It happens when prayer becomes, wholly and utterly, the flow of God's grace, transforming the land it flows through, like Ezekiel's stream. Or it happens when we lose consciousness of our own part in it and become simply receptors and carriers of grace. It happens when we realize that our transformation depends on nothing but God's grace and love, and, like the chrysalis, let go of all activity to try to achieve our own redemption.

When we try to describe it, we fail, for it lies beyond the world of words. We can open our hearts to it by the practice of awareness, but we cannot bring it about, any more than we can force a flower to open or an egg to hatch. And in our silent, trustful waiting, we are acknowledging that God is God, the source and the destination, the means and the end of all our prayer, whatever form it may take.



Jesus brings Lazarus back to life

5th Sunday of Lent, Year A

Fill in the missing word on each strip of cloth to find out what the letters in each box spell.

Jesus' good

r___n_ Lazarus was very sick.

Martha and M

___ were sad when their brother died.

"Lazarus will ___v_ again", said Jesus.

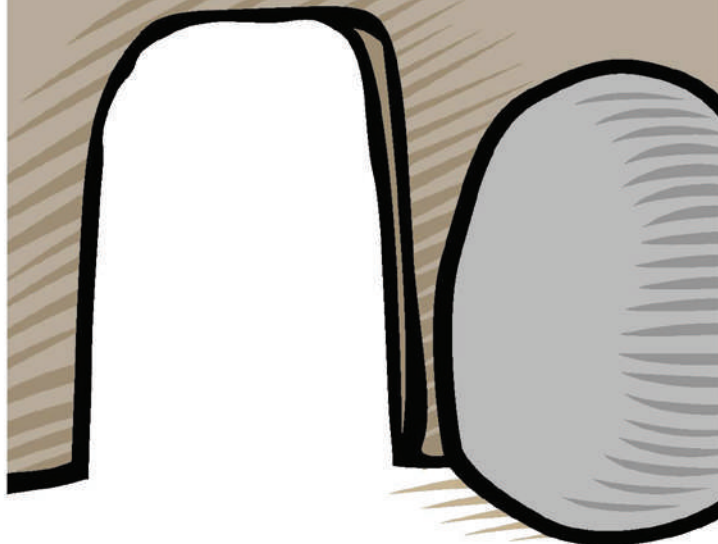
Jesus went to the opened

___b and prayed.

Lazarus walked out of

___s tomb alive.

Draw Lazarus leaving the tomb wrapped in strips of cloth.



Martha and Mary were sad when Lazarus died. They missed their brother, but still they showed faith in Jesus. What do you think Martha and Mary said to Lazarus when he came out of the tomb?



Pope Francis announces extraordinary 'Urbi et Orbi' blessing March 27



Pope Francis delivers the Angelus livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace on 22 March 2020. The Holy Father announced he will give an extraordinary blessing "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) at 6 pm Rome time Friday 27 March in an "empty" St Peter's Square because all of Italy is on lockdown to prevent further spread of the coronavirus. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media.

In response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis has said he will give an extraordinary blessing "Urbi et Orbi" (to the City and the world) at 6 pm Rome time March 27.

The formal blessing -- usually given only immediately after a new pope's election and on Christmas and Easter -- carries with it a plenary indulgence for all who follow by television, internet or radio, are sorry for their sins, recite a few prescribed prayers and promise to go to confession and to receive the Eucharist as soon as possible.

After reciting the Angelus prayer March 22 from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis announced his plans for the special blessing, which, he said, would be given in an "empty" St Peter's Square because all of Italy is on lockdown to prevent further spread of the virus.

With the public joining him only by television, internet or radio, "we will listen to the word of God, raise our prayer (and) adore the Blessed Sacrament," he said. "At the end, I will give the benediction 'urbi et orbi,' to which will be connected the possibility of receiving a plenary indulgence." An indulgence is an ancient practice of prayer and penance for the remission of the temporal punishment a person is due for sins that have been forgiven. In Catholic teaching, a person can draw on the merits of Jesus and the saints to claim the indulgence for themselves or offer it on behalf of someone who has died.

In addition to announcing the special blessing, Pope Francis said that at a time "when humanity trembles" because of the COVID-19 pandemic, he was asking Christians of every denomination to join together at noon March 25 to recite the Lord's Prayer.

The Catholic Church and many others mark March 25 as the feast of the Annunciation.

"To the pandemic of the virus we want to respond with the universality of prayer, compassion and tenderness," he said. "Let's stay united. Let us make those who are alone and tested feel our closeness," as well as doctors, nurses, other healthcare workers and volunteers.

Pope Francis also expressed concern for "authorities who have to take strong measures for our good" and the police and soldiers maintaining public order and enforcing the lockdown.

By Cindy Wood, Catholic News Service



Pope Francis delivers the Angelus livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace on 22 March 2020. The Holy Father announced he will give an extraordinary blessing "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) at 6 pm Rome time Friday 27 March in an "empty" St Peter's Square because all of Italy is on lockdown to prevent further spread of the coronavirus. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media.

The *Living* Word

First Reading

Ez 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 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

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 129. R. v.7

(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 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

Rom 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

Gospel Acclamation

See Jn 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

Jn 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

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

As a metaphor, death can stand for many things. The prophet Ezekiel witnessed the death of the nation. The gospel reports the death of Lazarus. Although Paul refers to the mortal character of our physical bodies, he is more concerned with spiritual life and death. Death attacks each one of us in all three of these ways. We are all mortal and subject to physical death; we are all sinners and must deal with the implications of spiritual death; we are all subject to the consequences of social sins such as terrorism, violence, group hatred, greed and ecological exploitation. The

Continued next page...



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question before us is whether or not we are going to allow death to reign in our lives and in our communities. All three readings for this Sunday, as well as the psalm response, point out our inability to raise ourselves out of the deaths that afflict us. In the passage from Ezekiel, it is God who promises to open the graves of the people; the people are helpless to do anything. The psalmist cries to God from out of the depths of pain and helplessness. Acknowledging human propensity to sin, Paul credits the Spirit of God with transforming death into life. Finally, it is Jesus who calls Lazarus out of the grave and returns him to his life. We can see that God does not leave us to languish in our various deaths. Instead, God offers us new life out of the tombs. All of this is accomplished through the mercy and compassion of God, simply responded with openness to God's choice of him. By what criteria do we judge others? Do we consider some people too insignificant for greatness? Are we overly concerned with status? Do we categorise people according to the disease or physical limitation that they must endure? Do we sometimes blame them for their disability? Do our eyes perceive life in accord with the standards of a materialistic, body-orientated, pleasure-seeking society? Or do we look into the other's heart, as God does? As with the other scrutiny Sundays, catechumens and long-standing members alike are exhorted to make a choice. Jesus is the one who gives sight to blind eyes and religious insight to those open to receive it. However, there is a price to pay. Will it be the standards of the world, or the power of God in Jesus Christ?

Liturgy for the Week

30/03 **Monday Fifth Week of Lent**
Dan 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62;
Jn 8:1-11

31/03 **Tuesday Fifth Week of Lent**
Num 21:4-9; Jn 8:21-30

APRIL

01/04 **Wednesday Fifth Week of Lent**
Dan 3:14-20, 24-25, 28; Jn 8:31-42

26/03 **Thursday Fifth Week of Lent**
Egen 17:3-9; Jn 8:51-59

27/03 **Friday Fifth Week of Lent**
Jer 20:10-13; Jn 10:31-42

28/03 **Saturday Fifth Week of Lent**
Ezek 37:21-28; Jn 11:45-56

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