

April 1-2, 2017
Fifth Sunday of Lent

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Romans 8:8-11

John 11:1-45

Like a thick cloud that cannot be dispelled, grief suffocates us. We do not hear the birds of Spring, the enticing fragrances of roses are deadened, we go through the motions of life but each day is heavy and merely endured. With the passage of time, for each according to their own schedule, the grace of God pulls us from the cloying grey of grief...perhaps with a new haircut, a visit to a mall for fresh summer cloths, an outing with friends for drinks, a movie that makes us laugh, the first smell of sun lotion on a hot day. Accompanied by a few DEEP breaths to fill both our lungs and soul with fresh air, we walk away from whatever grave we have stood beside so as to resume LIVING. In this weekend's retelling of the Lazarus event, the Gospel of John vividly retells the story of Jesus facing the loss of a dear friend...and then offering him the gift no one else could give...the gift of RESSUSITATION....bringing Lazarus back to life....AFTER THREE DAYS in the tomb no less. Powerfully reminding us that Jesus (along with the Father and the Holy Spirit) gives, sustains and restores life, this Gospel is more than just a single miracle. With the nearness of Palm/Passion Sunday (next weekend) and Easter, where are the graves within our own lives at which we wish Jesus to stand and call us back to life? Are we caught in a cycle of darkness because of a loss? Are we in a tomb of embarrassment because of poor choices? Are we endeavoring to live in a past that cannot be resuscitated? Do we mourn the passing of years and no longer believe we have anything to offer the world? Have we lost a job and feel dead and incapable of rousing ourselves for a fresh search? What and where are the places in our lives where things HAVE DIED....and to where, on this weekend, do we wish to call Jesus to COME AND SEE. And....and this is vital...if Jesus calls us back to life, what will we do with the gift? What will we do with no longer mourning or being overwhelmed with the past or with things that have changed? What will we do if the Holy Spirit calls us to walk away from the graves in which our heart, soul or mind have become entombed? Will we allow the Lord to untie us and send us back out into the world?

No joke, no April Fool...thank you for sharing these first hours of the new month with our Santa Clara community. Please keep our YOUTH preparing for Confirmation in your prayer as they retreat this weekend. **This TUESDAY, April 4th at 7pm is the occasion of our Parish Reconciliation Service.**...please come and let the healing grace of God call you out of whatever tombs in which your heart may be hiding. With Easter right around the corner, your prayers and best wishes are again sought on behalf of our Catechumens: **John Clifton, George Croushorn, Ariel Fermil, Melinda Ortiz and Lisa Woods** and Candidates: **Austin Brower, Kimberly Conrad, Jeff Conrad, Jeffery Conrad, Kennedy Conrad, Melissa Pujazon-Zazik and Greg Reiter** preparing to be welcomed/received into the Church on Holy Saturday...in your kindness please pray for them...and if you can, please write them a note of congratulations, blessings and welcome. Please drop off your notes of welcome during Holy Week prior to Easter weekend. These are the weeks when we start collecting your gifts of **POTTED FLOWERS** with which we will make our Hall bloom for Easter. A reminder that we are especially looking for large AZALEA TREES (from Costco ideally) or other long-lasting six-inch potted plants. If you wish to make a monetary donation...that works too...and we will do the shopping for you. Thank you in advance for your generosity. The Bulletin has other news of events including the whole

Holy Week/Easter Weekend Schedule...as you peruse it and start to plan your Easter brunches, lunches and dinners please know that you are loved. FKB