

5th Sunday of Lent

EZEKIEL'S COUNTER-STORY

It is difficult to overstate the bleak situation faced by the people of Israel described in today's reading from Ezekiel. Babylon had invaded Jerusalem, killed many of its inhabitants, and destroyed the temple. Some of them were forced into exile in Babylon. Their captors and neighbors likely concluded that the Babylonian deity had pummeled the Hebrew deity into submission. Israel's God was as good as dead, and the people of Israel as well.

In the midst of this catastrophe, Ezekiel announces a counter-story. The narrative of God's death is false. Israel's God is alive, and God's own breath will restore their life. They will be lifted out of the grave of their grief and despair, and be returned to their land. Ezekiel's message speaks to all of us who know of profound disorientation, of separation from loved ones, and of deep loss. God will bear our unbearable sorrow, and God's spirit will offer new life and hope.

RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Today's Gospel tells us of the raising of Lazarus. In Jesus' exchange with Lazarus' sister Martha, she refers to the general resurrection of the dead on "the last day." Jesus then shifts the perspective by identifying himself as "the resurrection and the life." What does this mean? Jesus earlier had spoken of the hour "when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live" (John 5:25). When Jesus cries out in a loud voice—"Lazarus, come out!"—Jesus fulfills that role in the present, offering resurrection and life here and now, in a new relationship with him.

Resurrection is offered not only on the last day, and not only at our physical death, but in the mix of our present daily lives. Sometimes we are buried in tombs of suffering or of entrapment in sin. When we encounter death in its many forms, in faith we can hear Jesus, who summons us out of death and into life.

Today's Readings: Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 [3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45]
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LA HISTORIA CONTRARIA DE EZEQUIEL

Es difícil exagerar la situación triste que enfrentó el pueblo de Israel descrito en la lectura de hoy del libro de Ezequiel. Babilonia había invadido Jerusalén, matado a muchos de sus habitantes y destruido el Templo. Algunos de ellos fueron forzados a ir en exilio a Babilonia. Sus captores y vecinos probablemente concluyeron que la deidad babilonia había dado una paliza a la deidad hebrea para someterla. El Dios de Israel estaba tan bueno como muerto, y también el pueblo de Israel.

En medio de esta catástrofe, Ezequiel anuncia una contra historia. El relato de la muerte de Dios es falso. El Dios de Israel está vivo, y el aliento del mismo Dios restaurará su vida. Ellos serán levantados de la tumba y su dolor desaparecerá, y regresarán a su tierra. El mensaje de Ezequiel habla a todos nosotros que conocemos de la profundidad de la desorientación, de la separación de los seres queridos y de una pérdida profunda. Dios llevará nuestro dolor insoportable, y el espíritu de Dios ofrecerá nueva vida y esperanza.

LA RESURRECCIÓN Y LA VIDA

El Evangelio de hoy nos habla de cómo revivió Lázaro. En el diálogo entre Jesús y Marta, la hermana de Lázaro, ella se refiere a la resurrección universal de la muerte en "el último día". Entonces Jesús cambia la perspectiva al identificarse él mismo como "la resurrección y la vida". ¿Qué significa esto? Anteriormente Jesús había hablado de la hora "en que los muertos oirán la voz de Dios, y todos los que la oigan, vivirán" (Juan 5:25). Cuando Jesús con voz alta dice: "¡Lázaro, sal!" Jesús cumple ese papel en el presente, ofreciendo vida nuevamente aquí y ahora en una nueva relación con él.

La resurrección se ofrece no solamente en el último día, y no solamente en nuestra muerte física, pero en la mezcla de nuestras vidas del día a día. Algunas veces estamos enterrados en tumbas de sufrimiento o atrapados en el pecado. Cuando encontramos la muerte en sus muchas formas, con fe podemos escuchar a Jesús, quien nos llama de la muerte a la vida.

Lecturas de hoy: Ez 37:12-14; Sal 130 (129):1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 [3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45]

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Please Pray for the Sick

Prayer List Updates



Danny Rae Schexnayder, Sr.	Paul Muñoz, Sr.	Baby Sophia
Sandra Jean Guerra	Joe Espinoza	Antonio Mendoza
Kayla Scott	Virginia & Jose Ponce	Sophie Alonzo
Maria Langley	Victoria Orosco	Helen Lloyd
Irma Urias	Henry Vidal	Odilion G. Flores
Mary S. Martinez	Hope Esquivel	JoAnn Almaguer
Frances Lozano	Victor Cruz	Diana Calderon
Mary Escalera	Tomas Johnson	Janie Ramirez
Maximus James Tobar	Deacon Jesus Rodriguez	Liz
Suzanne Gutierrez	Rosalinda Esparza	Ana Garcia
Terry Moreno	Daniel Rodriguez	Gina
Sarah Contreras	Rosie Flores	Pedro Maldonado, Sr.
Jose Flores	John Ruiz	Leonor Maldonado
Frances Ramirez	Jessica Diaz	Sandra Garza
Marty Carrera Tobias	Robert Campos	Elena Gonzales
Jesse R. Diaz	Gloria Martinez	Roxanne Joseph
Celina Herrera	Carlos Guardiola, III	For All Afflicted with
Kevin Ryan Martinez	Joe R. Martinez	Coronavirus
David Santoyo		

We thank God for the healing of so many sick parishioners. Please be courteous and call the Parish Office if your loved one is no longer suffering or sick. Thank you.

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE March 15-22, 2020

Weekly Collection / 10 AM	-\$2,609.99
Mail-In Collection	-\$ 525.00
2020 Gift of Giving	-\$ 1.00
Arch. Catholic Relief 2nd Collection	-\$ 74.00
TOTAL	\$3,209.99

DAILY MASS—NOON IN THE CHURCH
DAILY ROSARY—6 PM IN THE CHURCH
NO ADORATION UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Total of 10 individuals only are allowed in the church. Please understand as we are required to follow Diocesan and CDC Guidelines.

Announcements

www.stjohnberchmans.com

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK



Saturday, March 28

5:00 p.m. † George Hernandez

Sunday, March 29

10:00 a.m. † Mr. Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
† Daniel Arzola - Familia
† Ryan Sanchez—Family
† Juanita Torres
† Paul G. Salinas - Grace Salinas

Monday, March 30

Tuesday, March 31

12:00 p.m.
Gift of Life Cristina Santoyo

Wednesday, April 1 April Fool's Day

12:00 p.m. † Leonor Maldonado

Thursday, April 2

12:00 p.m. † John Gonzales Castañeda

Friday, April 3

12:00 p.m. † Edward E. Lewis

Saturday, April 4

12:00 p.m. † Inez Camarillo
Thanksgiving Chas & Chantal—Family

Sunday, April 5 Palm Sunday

10:00 a.m. † Mr. Guadalupe Treviño - Nora Treviño
† Guadalupe & Ernestina Huerta—Stephen Payne
† Daniel Arzola - Familia
† Juan C. Velasquez—Family
† Paul G. Salinas - Grace Salinas
† Aurelia Garai—Family

In Loving Memory

We pray for the souls of our dearly departed who have passed from our parish community:

† Leonor Maldonado

Sanctuary Light

For the Health of
The World



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

On March 23, 2020 the mayor of San Antonio and Bexar County judge issued their declaration ordering a Stay Home/Work Safe mandate for the city and county.

As your Pastor, it has been very difficult not to see you and minister to you and your families. This harsh reality reminds us of the danger and threat of what COVID -19 represents to our society and community. We have to be very vigilant and protect ourselves and those most vulnerable in our communities. Please follow the recommendations of the CDC, our mayor and Bexar County Judge and Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller.

I have ordered 80% of my office staff to remain at home out of abundant precautions. They are: Olivia Lopez, Delia Traspesa and Enrique Cepeda. Stella Rico, our Secretary, is still working full time in the office. Joan Orosco will continue helping as a Sacristan for current celebrations. A table has been placed outside of the office with bulletins and envelopes for donations. As you include your donation in the envelope, please insert it in the slot near the door that serves as a Mail Box. Envelopes will be collected on a daily basis. The door is locked for the safety of all. You are invited to ring the bell for additional assistance.

It is my obligation to not only be your spiritual leader but also your shepherd at all times. As you may well know, the United States and the entire world is living a pandemic regarding COVID-19. Our Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller in accordance with national state and local directives regarding our safety has decreed that effective immediately the Sunday Mass obligation is hereby dispensed for all Catholics.

All celebrations within the church including masses, Stations of the Cross and Rosaries are limited to 10 persons as required by the CDC guidelines, but are broadcast on live stream only of the exception of daily mass.

The following celebrations are still maintained:

- Daily mass Tuesday thru Saturday at 12:00 noon
- Daily Rosary Monday thru Sunday at 6:00 in the evening
- Station of the Cross on Friday at 7:00 in the evening
- Sunday mass at 10:00 in the morning

My gratitude goes to all of you who send us your donation either by stopping by the office to drop off your envelopes or money, or by mailing your envelopes or using the online apps created for your convenience or by calling in the office to use your credit card. I appreciate your generosity and financial support. Our weekly collection was \$3,209.99.

I encourage very young, aged and those with underlying health issues to view and participate in the daily and Sunday masses via CTSA, other television outlets or through archdiocesan electronics media.

We will continue to pray the rosary as many times as we can to implore the intercession of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. I invite you also to join me in praying for the victims, families and health care professionals during this pandemic COVID-19.

Let us remain calm and vigilant as we face this pandemic COVID-19.

With our daily prayer, rosary, faith and vigilance we will overcome this challenge and return to normalcy.

May God bless you always,

Father Fidèle Okitembo Dikete, Pastor

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