

I hope this finds you and your family doing well and keeping safe in all you do. The early church met in homes in what were called 'house churches'. Because of the coronavirus our Lord of Life church family is now meeting in 'house churches.' Below is a short liturgy for you to use on Sunday, March 29 at 10:30 which is the time we would normally gather for worship. I hope you will join other members who will be worshipping at that time. Please stay safe and let me know if there is anything the church can do for you.

God bless
Pastor

After having done the service from home for last Sunday, I changed the format just a little so you do not have to print the service and can use your iPad, phone or computer.

Sunday, March 29, 2020

Fifth Sunday in Lent

INTRODUCTION

In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome new sisters and brothers at the baptismal font, as we renew our baptismal promises.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

L: We bring our worship in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Leader will say a phrase and the family will repeat the phrase. There is a break between phrases.

L: Gracious God, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

Forgive us and give us strength to turn from sin and to serve you in newness of life. Amen.

L: By water and the Holy Spirit, God gives us new birth, and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God forgives us all our sins.

Almighty God strengthen us in all goodness and keep us in eternal life. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

READINGS- These three lessons for this Sunday seem very appropriate for what is going on around us as we look and wait in hope.

Ezekiel 37:1–14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the Lord."

1. In light of the virus that is affecting all of us, what hope does this passage give us as we face the days to come?

PSALM : Psalm 130

I wait for you, O LORD; in your word is my hope. (Ps. 130:5)

¹Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

²O LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

³If you were to keep watch over sins, O LORD, who could stand?

⁴Yet with you is forgiveness, in order that you may be feared

⁵I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits; in your word is my hope.

⁶My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,
more than those who keep watch for the morning.

⁷O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast love;
with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.

⁸For the LORD shall redeem Israel from all their sins

GOSPEL: John 11:1–45

Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.

1. Why did Jesus wait so long before going to see Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?
2. Why did Jesus have a hard time getting the disciples to understand about Lazarus?
3. What is so significant about Thomas' statement in s. 16?
4. What is significant about Jesus' conversation with Martha in vs.17-27?
5. What do we learn about Jesus in vs. 28-37?
6. In light of our present circumstances, what hope do you gain for the present and the future from vs. 40?

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: As we return to the waters of baptism during this season of Lent, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

You are the Lord: You have spoken, and you will act. Give your church confidence that in this life, you feed us with your word, and answer our every prayer. God of mercy,

hear our prayer.

L: You breathe into our dry bones, and we live. We pray for the universe, the solar system, and our fragile planet; for all creatures that creep or swim or fly or run. God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

L: You open our graves and bring us up from death. We pray for those who are afraid; for those who live in hiding; for those who have buried too many loved ones. God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

L: You wept at Lazarus's tomb and weep with us when we mourn. We pray for widows and orphans; for those who are depressed; for those who are sick (*especially*); we pray for those affected by this virus; we pray for those who have lost loved ones to this virus; we pray for all those who stand on the front lines fighting this virus; we pray especially for those who are not taking this virus seriously; and for those who have lost hope. God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

L: You are the resurrection and the life. We pray for our congregation; for the very old and very young among us; for singers, readers, ushers, acolytes, and those who help serve communion. God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Into your hands, God of abundant grace, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

BLESSING

L: The Lord you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine on you and give you peace. **Amen.**