Let us rejoice for the new Pope FRANCIS I

Fifth Sunday in Lent Year C

Untie him. Let him go free

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:12-14. I will put my spirit in you that you may live

Psalm 26: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption

Second Reading: Romans 8:8-11. The One who raised Christ from the dead will give life.

Alleluia Verse: 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...

Gospel: John 9:1-41. Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died

Com. Verse: Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.


Prayers of the Faithful

Celebrant: God is always doing something new, making a way in the desert, forming people to announce his praise. May our prayer of petition bring that newness of life and hope to all.

Leader: We thank God and pray for our new Pope Francis: (Pause)

People: May the Spirit guide him in his ministry for the good of the Church & of the whole world.

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord (Pause) All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for this faith community:

People: May this Eucharist strengthen us in faith as it empowers us to live the Gospel in daily life. (Pause)

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord. All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for catechumens and candidates preparing for full communion with the Catholic Church. (Pause)

People: May we be faithful companions on their journey. (Pause)

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord. All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader We pray for children and parents in the Reconciliation program: (Pause)

People: May they be touched by the personal love and compassion of our God. (Pause)

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord hear our prayer. Celebrant: Lord, receive our prayer and answer them in your mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thought for the Day:

In Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection, we are shown that the last word in human existence is not death but God’s victory over death. Divine love, manifested in its fullness in The Chrism Mass. The Chrism Mass is an important event for the whole diocese for, in it, the local Church shows its care for those being initiated, those designated for the ordained ministry and those who are sick. ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE PART. To manifest the communion of the priests with their bishop in a leadership of service, the bishop concelebrates with at least some priests from different parts of the diocese. This is the context for the renewal of commitment to priestly service by those who are ordained and by all who share in the priesthood of the baptized. (Pascale Solemnita-

Anniversary: 17th March - Please pray for John Lugg

Please Pray for those who are sick: Bridie Kuskey, Loraine Scofield, Gerardo Del Regno, George Dunne, Trevor Feehan.
Living the Gospel:  *Untie them and let them go*

Death seems to be a constant companion in life. Martha’s ‘Lord, if you had been here’ could be the cry of anyone whose child is killed in an accident; a loved one is living with cancer, or friend brutally bashed and murdered. Martha’s cry is our cry: ‘Where were you when I needed you?’ We have a powerful image here: God/Jesus stands outside the tomb and weeps.

The First Reading gives us the vision of Ezekiel- the vision of a valley of skeletal remains was for Ezekiel a parable of the nation that was in exile in Babylon. This must have been the darkest moment in the history of God’s chosen people. We are assured that we are not alone in our darkest moments. God stands with us at the grave and makes a promise of life that mocks the evidence before us. God says NO!!!!!

This chapter of the Gospel of John comes midpoint in and is the focus of the entire Gospel. Everything leads to it, and everything that follows is seen in light of Jesus’ words: ‘I am the resurrection and the life’. It is the heart of our belief.

Nothing is beyond God’s power - not sin, violence, injustice, disbelief, evil and death itself. The Gospel story and the dry bones story focuses on those who struggle to live and believe whilst surrounded by death, called to ‘Come out!’ from darkness into the light; from death into life, from unfreedom into freedom. Fullness of life exists when our lives are shaped by love: when our patience, acceptance and kindness go beyond our own kind to those who are different. Like Jesus, we are sent to stand at the tombs and call *Untie them and let them go*. Often we hold ourselves and others captive by our fears and self-image and by the way others define and name us. We imprison people by our judgments, prejudices, fear and isolation. Jesus, through the power of God, broke through the stone-blocked tomb and called the dead man to life. We have the power to unbind one another and free each other and love another into life. Soon Jesus will give us the Easter message of freedom. ‘If you bind one another, they will be bound, if you free them, they will be free.’

**PARISH NOTICES AND COMING EVENTS**

**Weekly Collections:**
1st Collection: $ 924.00  
2nd Collection: $1442.30 Direct Debit $105.00.

**MARCH**

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** every Friday in Lent at 6.00 pm  
In Tetum on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm.  
In Malayalam on Friday at 7.00 pm.  
No Stations of the Cross on Good Friday.

**RACHEL’S VINEYARD:** Healing Retreat for women/men following an abortion, however long ago. Contact Joan on 0447 108 670 or rachelsvineyarddarwin@hotmail.com


Monday 18th March St Patrick’s Day. Mass 5.30 pm.  
Tuesday 19th March Feast of St Joseph. Mass 6.45 am.

Thursday 21st at 7pm Parish Lenten Reconciliation and First Reconciliation for children. Everybody is welcome.

**OLSH Associates meeting at St Mary’s on Saturday 23rd Sunday 24th March. PALM SUNDAY.** Blessing of Palms and procession at 8.30 am Mass. Other Christian denominations in Nightcliff will join us for this. Everybody is welcome

Singing practices today at 3.30pm with Geoff & Choir.

HOLY THURSDAY. 7.00 am Syro-Malabar Mass. 7.30 pm Mass of the Lord’s Supper.

**GOOD FRIDAY 7.30 am** Syro-Malabar Celebration of the Passion. 3.00 pm English Celebration of the Passion

HOLY SATURDAY: 7.30 pm EASTER VIGIL. 11.30 pm Syro-Malabar Mass of the Resurrection.

EASTER SUNDAY. Dawn Service on Foreshore 6.00 am.  
Easter morning Mass at 8.30 am.  
Italian Mass at 10.00 am, and Evening Mass at 6.00 pm.

P.S. Please put your name in one of the Easter Ceremonies on the clip-board on the table as you leave the Church.

Saturday 23rd March working bee and Church spring-cleaning. We need many volunteers. Please come along—many hands make work light.