



FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A — 29th March 2020

The community of the Cathedral of St. Stephen acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which our parish stands.

*Embracing
Villa Maria Centre
and
St Patrick's
Fortitude Valley*



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Archbishop of Brisbane

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Jesus cried in a loud voice, "Lazarus, here! Come out!" The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, let him go free."

Readings for today: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

Dear friends,

As the worldwide fatalities from the Coronavirus climbs beyond 22,000 people in just a few months, the whiff of death and the fear of sickness is everywhere we look this Sunday. As you know, all public worship has been suspended and the doors of churches are closed which heightens our sense of isolation and anxiety. We are shut-in and shut-out all at the same time. Even the Liturgy of the Word for this Fifth Sunday of Lent is fixated with graves.

Lazarus finds himself in the same predicament. Who knows what Lazarus died from but his death happened relatively quickly, over the course of a few days. Jesus' delay was no act of self-isolation or social distancing. Nor was Lazarus' death inconsequential to Jesus: he wept. Something greater than death is afoot in the person of Jesus. He is more a wise teacher or random healer; he truly is the one who reigns over life and death.

Lazarus' return is no resurrection. He finds new life but he will face death again at another time.

Lazarus has the potential to be a transformed human being if Jesus' words find a home in him: "Unbind him and let him go free". These words weren't only addressed to the bystanders; this was Jesus speaking to "death" itself. From the moment we are born, "death" has its clutches into us all. In a million ways, consciously and subconsciously, death stalks us and this knowledge of our finitude and mortality makes us fearful, rebellious and defiant. This rebellion and defiance is called sin and, at its root, is our conscious awareness of death, and this awareness makes us do strange and senseless things indeed. This fear of death is why we panic buy, why we listen to illogical and unreasoned opinions, and why we turn away from our fellow human beings in need and serve ourselves. We can also fall prey to death's greatest deceit: that we are invincible. In truth, we are vulnerable and we are acutely aware of this at this present moment. Let us allow Jesus to speak directly to "death" this Sunday on our behalf: "Unbind them and let them go free".

Fr. Anthony



*Cathedral of
St. Stephen
249 Elizabeth St
Brisbane*



*St. Patrick's
58 Morgan St
Fortitude Valley*



*Villa Maria Chapel
171 St Pauls Tce
Spring Hill*

Cathedral Parish Mass Times this week

Monday to Friday: 8.00am (*live-streamed*)
Saturday: 11.30am – Marian Devotions (*live-streamed*)
Sunday

Cathedral of St Stephen

Saturday: *Suspended until further notice*
Sunday: 8.00am; 10.00am (*live-streamed*)

St Patrick's *Suspended until further notice*
Villa Maria *Suspended until further notice*

Reconciliation: **Monday to Friday** *Suspended until further notice*
Saturday

Stations of the Cross **Friday 10.30am** (*live-streamed*)

Exposition: *Suspended until further notice*

Benediction: *Suspended until further notice*

PLENARY COUNCIL PRAYER

*Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost.
Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land.*

*O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia
and guide us on the pilgrim way of the Plenary Council.*

*Give us the grace to see your face in one another
and to recognise Jesus, our companion on the road.*

*Give us the courage to tell our stories
and to speak boldly of your truth.*

*Give us ears to listen humbly to each other
and a discerning heart to hear what you are saying.*

*Lead your Church into a hope-filled future,
that we may live the joy of the Gospel.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
bread for the journey from age to age.*

Amen

*Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us.
St Mary MacKillop, pray for us.*



LENTEN PRAYER

*Fast from judging others;
feast on the Christ indwelling in them.
Fast from emphasis on differences;
feast on the unity of all life.
Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.
Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger; feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.
Fast from worry; feast on trust.
Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.
Fast from negatives; feast on affirmatives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures;
feast on unceasing prayer.
Fast from hostility; feast on nonviolence.
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.
Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.
Fast from facts that depress; feast on truths that uplift.
Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.
Fast from thoughts that weaken;
feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.
Gentle God, during this season of fasting and feasting,
gift us with your presence,
so we can be a gift to others in carrying out your work.
Amen.*

PRAYER IN TIME OF CRISIS

**Almighty and all-merciful God, lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death, save us in this time of crisis;**

grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;

watch over all medical people as they tend the sick and work for a cure;

stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;

if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.

By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,

that hope may never die and the light of Easter,

the triumph of life, may shine upon us and the whole world.

Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,

who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Holy Mary, health of the sick, pray for us.

St Joseph, guardian of us all, pray for us.