

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

In our Lenten journey we have reached the fifth Sunday, day for the third scrutiny of the Elect who will receive the Sacraments of Initiation on the Easter Vigil.

The theme of this Sunday is life. On the third Sunday of Lent, first scrutiny, the symbol was water. The Lord gives to the Samaritan woman the living water which she accepts. On the fourth Sunday, second scrutiny, the symbol was the light. The blind man allows the light to enlighten his heart and thus he believes. On the fifth Sunday, third scrutiny, the symbol is life, the life of grace which the elect will receive on the day of his/her baptism, life symbolized by the white robe they will receive after baptism.

MORNING PRAYER – V SUNDAY OF LENT

God come to my assistance

Lord make haste to save me

Glory to the Father...

As it was in the beginning....

Hymn - *Blest Be The Lord* – John Michael Talbot- CD City of God

Ant. 1 My God you have become my help

PSALM 63

1. O God, you are my God, for you I long
My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.
2. For you love is better than life
My lips will speak your praise
So I will bless you all my life
In you name I will lift up my hands
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
My mouth shall praise you with joy.
1. On my bed I remember you
On you I muse through the night
For you have been my help
In the shadow of your wings I rejoice
My soul clings to you .
Your right hand holds me fast.

ALL : Glory... as it was...

Ant. 1 My God you have become my help

Canticle of Daniel 3,57-89

Ant. 2 Free us by your wonderful works, deliver us from the power of death

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
You heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.

All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Sun and moon, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Stars of heaven, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Every shower and dew, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

All you winds, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Fire and heat, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
[Cold and chill, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Dew and rain, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

Frost and chill, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Ice and snow, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Nights and days, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Light and darkness, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Let the earth bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
Mountains and hills, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

You springs, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Seas and rivers, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

All you birds of the air, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
You sons of men, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
O Israel, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

Ant. 2 Free us by your wonderful works, deliver us from the power of death

Psalm 149

Ant. 3 The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified

1. Sing a new song to the Lord, his praise in the assembly of the faithful
Let Israel rejoice in its maker, let Zion's sons exult in their king
Let them praise his name with dancing
And make music with timbrel and harp.
2. For the Lord takes delight in his people. He crowns the poor with salvation
Let the faithful rejoice in their glory, shout for joy and take their rest
Let the praise of God be on their lips and a two edged sword in their hand.

ALL : Glory.... As it was....

Ant. 3 The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified

READINGS

First Reading. Book of Ezekiel

- This is a prophetic book with a great variety of literary form.
- This prophet accomplished his ministry, among the Israelites in exile in Babylon, during very difficult and decisive times in the history of Israel.
It seems that Ezekiel, like Jeremiah had opposed the political intrigues of his time, that wanted to overthrow the Babylonian power.
- In our bibles we find this book after Isaiah and Jeremiah.
- But it has not always been like this. The former order was:
 - Jeremiah first, he prophesized doom and punishment.
 - Ezekiel begins with oracles of doom, ends with oracles of consolation.
 - Isaiah is all about consolation.
- The oracles in the book of Ezekiel are arranged in the following way: cc 1-24 oracles of judgment against Israel. cc.25-48 there is an abundance variety of words of consolation and hope.

Ez 37,12-14

- ★ The passage that we will read this coming Sunday belongs to the second part of the book, the part of consolation.
- ★ And truly the text is about consolation.
 - Using the image of the dead raising from their tombs
 - The prophet announces to the people that the future restoration after the exile will be like the joy of these dead leaving their tombs alive.
- ★ When this will happen the people will know that God is the Lord.
- ★ In our life, when the suffering is changed into joy, we acknowledge that God is truly the Lord, the only one who can change our mourning into dancing.

Rm 8,8-11

- ✚ Paul speaks about flesh and spirit.
- ✚ Flesh according to Paul is all that belongs to the works of darkness, sin.
- ✚ While the spirit represents everything that is good in ourselves.
- ✚ We are called to live in the spirit, that is to say, in the way of good because we have received the Spirit of God who abides in us.
- ✚ We all have received this Spirit of God when we were baptized and confirmed. In the whole world many brothers and sisters are preparing themselves to welcome the Spirit of God in their lives, the day of the celebration of the sacraments of initiation on the Easter Vigil.
- ✚ Every Sunday when we pray the creed we say “I believe in the resurrection of the flesh (dead). This resurrection is only possible if the Spirit of God lives in us.
- ✚ The Spirit of God abides in me, in the deepest recesses of my being. Am I there to share with him? Where am I?

Gospel Jn 11,1-45

- ✓ This sign, the miracle of Lazarus shows that the Father has given to his Son Jesus power over life and death.
- ✓ In the gospels of Mark and of Luke (Mk 5,22-23; Lk 7,11-16) the Lord gives life back to someone who has just died.
- ✓ But in the case of Lazarus four days have already passed, therefore enough time for his soul to have left the body, which has already begun to decompose.

- ✓ Thus the power of Jesus over life and death is shown.
- ✓ Lazarus, the dead man, is the brother of Martha and Mary. The Gospel of Luke presents these two sisters welcoming Jesus into their home. Mary listens to him and Martha is busy serving him.
- ✓ In vv. 9-10 the John plays with the words light and darkness. Jesus is our light, with him we will not stumble because his light enlightens us, it is daylight, we can do the works of the spirit (Paul talks about in his letter to the Romans), but when we depart from Him, we stumble because we do not see, it is night, we do the works of the flesh.(Paul says that to the Romans)
- ✓ Jesus postpones to go to see Lazarus, he waits until he has died, and he says to his disciples that he is glad for their sake because this will help them on their journey of faith.
- ✓ John portrays the two sisters behaving in a similar way that Luke presents them in his gospel.
 - Martha, the woman of action, goes in haste to meet Jesus who is still on his way.
 - Mary does not move until her sister tells her that the Teacher calls her.
- ✓ The dialogue of each one of these two women with Jesus has some resemblance:
 - Both say to Jesus, maybe as a complain, *if you had been here...*
 - As he did with the Samaritan woman, Jesus tries to take Martha a step forward in her journey of faith. From faith in the resurrection on the last day, to believe that Jesus has the power to bring Lazarus back to life now.
 - For the miracle to take place Martha has to believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. *Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God.*
 - The Samaritan woman received the precious revelation that Jesus is the Messiah; the blind man received the revelation that Jesus is the Son of Man and Martha hears Jesus saying *I am the resurrection and the life.*
- ✓ Those who had come to console the two sisters wonder, if this man who opened the eyes of the man born blind, could he not do something so that Lazarus would have not died? We all have doubts when we do not understand, when things do not go the way we expect. We do not understand the ways of God, but it is not about understanding but about trusting in his infinite and unconditional love.
- ✓ Again the Lord dialogues with Martha to bring her to unconditional faith, in spite of not seeing or not understanding, only then she will see the glory of God. Only when we surrender ourselves completely in his arms we enjoy freedom which allows us to fly and to break our chains.
- ✓ Lazarus comes back to life, transformed and free by the word and power of Jesus. *Untie him.. and let him go free. (v.44)*
- ✓ Those who saw the sign believed, Jesus had already given thanks to his Father because this sign would made them believe in the Father. (v. 41a-42)

MARY'S SONG - MAGNIFICAT

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.

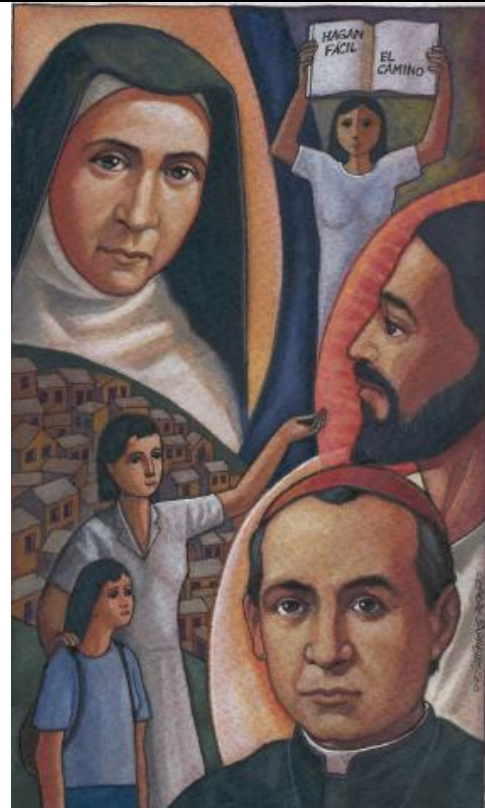
The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly.
The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty.
He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy,
according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever

Prayer:

Father help us to be like Christ your Son, who loved the world and died for our salvation. Inspire us by his love, guide us by his example, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.

CLARETIAN CORNER



Only the one, who knows the mutual sympathy of two hearts united by God for himself in the same spirit, can understand the pain that filled my soul in this most sad occasion. My suffering was equal to the love I had for her, because it was no less than a love fashioned by God, and I loved her as a part of my soul. So, I felt such pain with this separation as if my soul would be separated from my body. How many things afflicted my soul at the same time!
(Written when Sr. Florentina Seingler, one of the co-foundress died in Cuba) María Antonia París, Foundress of the Claretian Missionary Sisters, *Aut. 180.*

That last summer, the Blessed Virgin saved me from drowning in the sea. Because I had been working so hard, I did not feel very well... One day as I was walking along the beach on my way to the "old sea" on the other side of La *Barceloneta*, a huge wave suddenly engulfed me and carried me out to sea. I saw in a moment that I was far from shore, and I was amazed to see that I was floating on the surface, although I did not know how to swim. I called out to the Blessed Virgin and found myself on shore without having swallowed even a drop of water. While I was in the water, I felt exceedingly calm, but afterwards, on shore, I was horrified at the thought of the danger I had escaped through the help of the Blessed Virgin. St. Anthony M. Claret, Founder of the Claretian Missionary Sisters, *Aut. 71.*