

## **Homily > Lent V Sunday (A), 3rd Scrutiny, 06<sup>th</sup> April, 2025.**

(Cycle A Readings)

As we journey through Lent, we now find ourselves at the 5th Sunday, a pivotal moment in our preparation for the celebration of Easter. Today's readings invite us to reflect on the power of God to bring life from death - an incredibly fitting theme as we approach the Passion of Christ.

In our first reading from the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 37:12-14), God promises to restore His people from the graves they have been scattered in. The Israelites, living in exile, felt as if they had lost everything - hope, identity, and the very presence of God. But God speaks through Ezekiel, saying, "I will open your graves and have you rise from them." This promise speaks to the resurrection of the people of Israel, but it also points to a deeper, spiritual truth: that God is the Lord of life, and nothing - no situation, no despair - is beyond His power to restore and heal.

We, too, are called to believe in this restoration. Sometimes, like the Israelites, we may feel trapped in our own "graves" - in sin, in suffering, in despair. But God is always working to call us out, to breathe new life into us. His grace is not just for the end of our lives, but for our lives right now. He desires to breathe His Spirit into us today, bringing healing, renewal, and hope.

The psalm (Psalm 130:1-8) beautifully echoes the cry of a person who feels distant from God, who longs for forgiveness and redemption. "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord," the psalmist says, showing us that even in our most desperate moments, God hears our cry. We are reminded that God's mercy is boundless and that He is always ready to forgive. This is the mercy we experience in Christ, who is the embodiment of God's love for us, no matter how deep our sin or despair may seem.

In the second reading from Romans (Romans 8:8-11), St. Paul tells us that if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us, then He will give life to our mortal bodies. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is active in our lives, giving us the strength to live out our faith and overcome the power of sin and death. This is the power of the resurrection working in us already, and it should fill us with hope and confidence that death and sin have no final victory over us.

The Gospel reading (John 11:1-45) brings this theme to its fullest expression. We read the powerful story of the raising of Lazarus. Lazarus has been dead for four days, and his sisters, Martha and Mary, are heartbroken, saying to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." In this story, Jesus shows us that death is not the end. He says to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me, even if they die, will live."

Then, in a stunning act, Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb, demonstrating that He has authority over death itself. Lazarus is raised from the dead, and the mourners who were there to witness this miracle could not deny that Jesus was the source of life.

This story is not just about a physical resurrection; it's a promise of spiritual renewal. Just as Lazarus was called out of the tomb, Jesus calls us out of the darkness and death of sin into the new

life of grace. The message of this Gospel is clear: Jesus has power over death and He is calling each of us to new life in Him.

As we prepare for Easter, let us remember that Jesus is the source of all resurrection. He has the power to bring life where there is death, hope where there is despair, and healing where there is brokenness. If we feel like we are in a tomb, stuck in our sin or suffering, let us hear Christ calling us out, offering us new life.

This Lenten season is a time for us to examine the “graves” in our lives - the places where we need healing, renewal, and resurrection. Let us open our hearts to the life-giving Spirit, so that we may experience the transforming power of God's love and rise with Christ this Easter.