

Pre-Mass Catechesis

Lent 5

March 28/29

We have come to last days of Lent. Next week is Palm Sunday and Holy Week. In today's scriptures we have a glimpse of what God is capable of doing: he can raise the dead to new life. Lazarus was truly dead. He had been in the tomb four days. Yet our God is the lord of the living and the dead. Jesus has power over death. He can rejuvenate and revive. He is able to transform our bland, boring existence into something wonderful.

The raising of Lazarus reminds us that each one of us can become spiritually dead. Yet Jesus will raise us up. The Eucharist also has the power to raise us up. It is transformative and life-giving. It allows us to have a new perspective on life. But above all, the Eucharist is the exemplification of love. God so loved the world that he sent his son Jesus. Jesus so loved the world that he died for our sins, rose from the dead, and gives us his own Body and Blood for our salvation.

This week we celebrate the third scrutiny whereby the elect express their desire for purification and redemption by Christ. By this means, first of all, the elect are instructed gradually about the mystery of sin, from which the whole world and every person longs to be delivered and thus saved from its present and future consequences. Second, their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water (gospel of the Samaritan woman in the first scrutiny), the light of the world (gospel of the man born blind in the second scrutiny), the resurrection and the life (gospel of Lazarus in the third scrutiny). From the first to the final scrutiny the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation.

Every Catholic, both catechumens and cradle Catholics, is offered the gift of nourishment and healing in the Eucharist. The Body, Blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ allows us to be one with God and transforms us to be more like God.

May the Eucharist, the source of our life, raise us up like Lazarus. May we become what we eat: living representatives of Christ who lead others to Christ by our faithful witness of love and charity.