



# God's Word for this Week

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March**  
*The Fifth Sunday in Lent*

## **The Collect of the Day**

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection  
of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
Grant that by faith in him  
who suffered on the cross,  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **The Lent Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
you hate nothing that you have made  
and forgive the sins  
of all those who are penitent:  
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts  
that we, worthily lamenting our sins  
and acknowledging our wretchedness,  
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,  
perfect remission and forgiveness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **The Old Testament Reading** Ezekiel 37: 1-14

<sup>37</sup>The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup>He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup>He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' <sup>4</sup>Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup>Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath\* to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup>I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath\* in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.'

<sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup>I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup>Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath:\* Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath,\* and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.'<sup>10</sup>I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." <sup>12</sup>Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.<sup>13</sup>And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup>I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'

## The Epistle.

Romans 8: 6-11

<sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit\* is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup> But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit,\* since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit\* is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ\* from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through\* his Spirit that dwells in you.

## The Gospel

John 11: 1-45

<sup>11</sup>Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent a message to Jesus,\* 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' <sup>4</sup>But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' <sup>5</sup>Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup>after having heard that Lazarus\* was

ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. <sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' <sup>8</sup>The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' <sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup>But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' <sup>11</sup>After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' <sup>12</sup>The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' <sup>13</sup>Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup>For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' <sup>16</sup>Thomas, who was called the Twin,\* said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus\* had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup>Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles\* away, <sup>19</sup>and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. <sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' <sup>23</sup>Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' <sup>24</sup>Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' <sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life.\* Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, <sup>26</sup>and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' <sup>27</sup>She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,\* the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

<sup>28</sup> When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' <sup>29</sup>And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup>The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. <sup>32</sup>When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit

and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup>He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' <sup>35</sup>Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup>So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

<sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' <sup>40</sup>Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' <sup>41</sup>So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' <sup>43</sup>When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' <sup>44</sup>The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' <sup>45</sup> Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

### Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;  
Lord, hear my voice;  
let your ears consider well the voice of my  
supplication.  
If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,  
O Lord, who could stand?  
But there is forgiveness with you,  
so that you shall be feared.  
I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;  
in his word is my hope.  
My soul waits for the Lord,  
more than the night watch for the morning,  
more than the night watch for the morning.  
O Israel, wait for the Lord,  
for with the Lord there is mercy;  
With him is plenteous redemption  
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.



Put your hope in the Lord,  
for with the Lord is unfailing love  
and with him is full redemption.  
Psalm 130:7

### Reflections. Nothing is impossible for God.

Rivers have returned to full life and skies, previously lidded with smog and pollution, are bright and blue and clear. In the midst of tragedy and crisis, we are beginning to see the earth respond in its constant striving for renewal of itself, rebirth and new life. The readings for today are filled with new breath and new life.

As God uses the vision given to Ezekiel of the valley of dried bones breathed back into life to prove his restoration of Israel, so Jesus uses the raising of Lazarus from the dead to prove beyond doubt the power of God to those who stood by and watched. Yet, beneath the surface of these two readings lies a deeper meaning. These readings are drawn together by an Epistle in their midst in which the writer of the Letter to the Romans reminds us that God gives us new life *spiritually*, in the invisible and inward parts of ourselves. There is comfort in the words '*if God dwells within us, we receive new life!*' If God who had the power to raise Jesus from the dead dwells within you, that same life-restoring power will provide a depth of joy and a certain type of life that this world cannot provide.

In these days of uncertainty, perhaps the knowledge that the creator of this world dwells within us is a rock on which to firmly stand in trust and faith; a force to call upon from the depths of ourselves in prayer and intentions sent outwards into the world.

### The Grouped Parishes of Powerscourt with Kilbride

<sup>14</sup>*I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.* Ezekiel 37:14

## Prayers

### A Prayer in the Time of the Coronavirus

Almighty and All-loving God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
we pray to you through Christ the Healer  
for those who suffer from the Coronavirus Covid-19  
in Ireland and across the world.  
We pray too for all who reach out to those who mourn the loss  
of each and every person who has died as a result of contracting the disease.  
Give wisdom to policymakers,  
skill to healthcare professionals and researchers,  
comfort to everyone in distress  
and a sense of calm to us all in these days of uncertainty and distress.  
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord  
who showed compassion to the outcast,  
acceptance to the rejected  
and love to those to whom no love was shown.  
  
Amen.

*Archbishop Michael Jackson  
Dublin & Glendalough*

Heavenly Father,  
Through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ you show us your power to heal and restore new life. Today we pray for our world and the countries within it struggling to contain the Coronavirus and maintain life among those who have contracted this illness. May we return our thoughts to you in the certain knowledge that your Spirit dwells within us. Help us to draw upon your presence now, in the quieter moments of our day. Help us to connect with you. Protect us Lord and those we love and, in this time of waiting, unite our hearts and minds and give us your peace. Amen.

Dear Parishioners,  
Know that you are held in prayer at this difficult time. We are a community of wonderful people who are more than happy to help if you have any needs. Please do not hesitate to call if there is anything you require. Stay home and stay safe and God give you his comfort and peace in this time of quietness. Every blessing,

Cathy (086 3583104)

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