

LIVING FAITH

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

THE WORD OF GOD TODAY

John 11: 3-7, 17, 20-27, 33-45

Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' 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.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

... Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 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.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. 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.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' 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.'

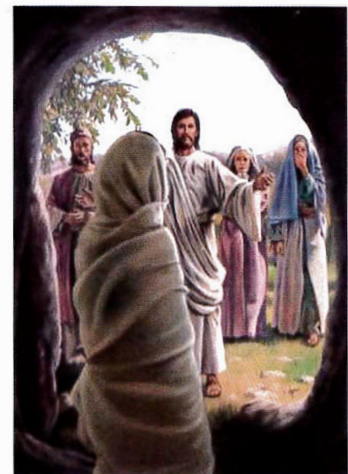
REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

This story is about Jesus, and how he raised Lazarus from the dead. There are many interesting things in this story, but today, let's focus on just one. Have you ever noticed that Jesus enlists the people to assist him in this task? As Lazarus emerges from the tomb, Jesus tells the people, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Put yourself in this story. Imagine Jesus saying to you the words, "Unbind him/her and let them go free." Who is Jesus talking about? Who are you being invited to set free?

If we look with the eyes of our hearts, we can easily see that there are many people around us who are unfree, bound by invisible chains, imprisonments that probably do not have walls or guards. Some of them are imprisoned by mental illness or by addiction. Some are imprisoned by gossip, and by the stories spread about them or their past that make it difficult for them to go about their daily lives in a productive manner. Some are bound by a poor self-image. Some are unfree because they cannot forgive a friend, family member or neighbour for a wrong done to them in the past. Some are not free because they have never heard the words, "I forgive you" from the lips of another person.

Today, hear Jesus saying to you, 'Unbind them, and set them free.'



Visit: www.rcsj.org

SOLIDARITY SUNDAY



Development and Peace has been at the heart of change for 50 years! Thank you for being with us!

WOMEN AT THE HEART OF CHANGE

For Lent 2017, Development and Peace – Caritas Canada has chosen to put women at the forefront to highlight their role and their very special importance in every aspect of development, whether it be social, environmental or economic.

Women at the Heart of Change conjures up more than just the desire to reiterate the centrality of women as an engine of change. It is also to open people's hearts during this season of Lent to the sufferings, injustices and obstacles faced, every single day, by millions of women and girls all over the world.

It is to pray, as Pope Francis invited us to do in May 2016, "that in all countries of the world, women may be honoured, respected and valued for their essential contribution to society."

Above all else, it is to act in solidarity with and walk along-side those women and men who advocate for an equal and inclusive society, one in which women can participate hand-in-hand with men in building the world of tomorrow. Be at the heart of change!

A family activity for this week: Visit the website of Development and Peace. Find out more about this organization which has been serving for the past 50 years. Their Share Lent campaign this year focuses on Women At the Heart of Change. Explore, educate and discuss as a family.

Visit at: www.devp.org/en/sharelent2017/materials

YOU ASKED...

I heard that Archbishop Currie was going to visit some offices of the Roman Curia while he was in Rome. What offices are there?



The Roman Curia is the administration of the Holy See, through which the pope guides and directs the Catholic Church. There many offices and departments in the Curia. They are the following:

1. Congregations, headed by a prefect, who is most frequently a cardinal:
 1. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (which also has jurisdiction over sexual abuse of minors committed by priests)
 2. The Congregation for the Oriental Churches
 3. The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
 4. The Congregation for the Causes of Saints
 5. The Congregation for Bishops
 6. The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples
 7. The Congregation for the Clergy
 8. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
 9. The Congregation for Catholic Education (for seminaries and educational institutions)
2. Dicasteries
 1. The Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life
 2. The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development
3. Tribunals:
 1. The Apostolic Penitentiary
 2. The Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura
 3. The Tribunal of the Roman Rota
4. Pontifical councils
 1. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
 2. The Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts
 3. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
 4. The Pontifical Council for Culture
 5. The Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization
5. Offices:
 1. The Apostolic Camera, headed by the Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church
 2. The Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See
 3. The Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See
6. Secretariats:
 1. The Secretariat of State (or Papal Secretariat)
 2. The Secretariat for the Economy
 3. The Secretariat for Communications



To find out more, go to: www.vatican.va/roman_curia/index.htm

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JESUS AND FAMILIES

Sometimes, when we think of Jesus and families, we stop at the Holy Family—Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The Gospels offer us a number of stories in which Jesus meets with and shares life with families. Just call some of them to mind... the call of the first disciples, two sets of brothers-- Peter and Andrew, James and John—the cure of Peter's mother-in-law, the raising of Jairus' daughter, the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, the raising of Lazarus. We could go on, but the point is clear. Jesus knows that, mixed in with the joys and ordinary stuff of family life, there are trials and tribulations. In our efforts to love one another, we sometimes stumble. We have to develop the skills of offering and receiving forgiveness. We need Jesus to call to us, to heal us and cure us, and to raise us up and put us back on the path again.

What about your family—
How do you teach and practice saying "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you"?
How do you offer each other second chances?
How do you unbind one another and set one another free?

"UNBIND HIM, AND LET HIM GO!" Reflections of a Prison Chaplain Gerry Phelan

There's a cartoon that shows a locksmith being called to a prison, by an inmate. He's obviously looking for an easy escape, but we know that's not going to happen. People, who do the crime, have to do the time; most truly guilty people accept that.

A few weeks ago, I tried not to notice the track marks on his arms, as Randy grabbed my outstretched hand, welcoming him to my office. I hadn't seen this man before, but like so many who visit with me at the prison's pastoral care department, he's here because of drugs.

Each story is as unique as the individual, but for most, the search for an escape from pain, prompted them to try something else. For most, there is a root cause for their addiction. Faulty choices and broken lives have led them here, their future now defined by a day they would like to take back. Sentenced to the tombs of society, they also need freedom from what put them here in the first place.

Perhaps people had given up on Lazarus. He was dead for days before Jesus performed the miracle of today's Gospel. Jesus said "Unbind him, and let him go free." It was a second chance.

The inmates have been given a time out, one I try to convince them to use to reflect and reconnect with God. I can't raise the dead, but I can roll the stone away, so they can hear God's word, to remove the bindings of the past. It takes patience; it takes faith. We all need do-overs.

They, like us, need that second chance.
I am Lazarus. And likely, so are you.