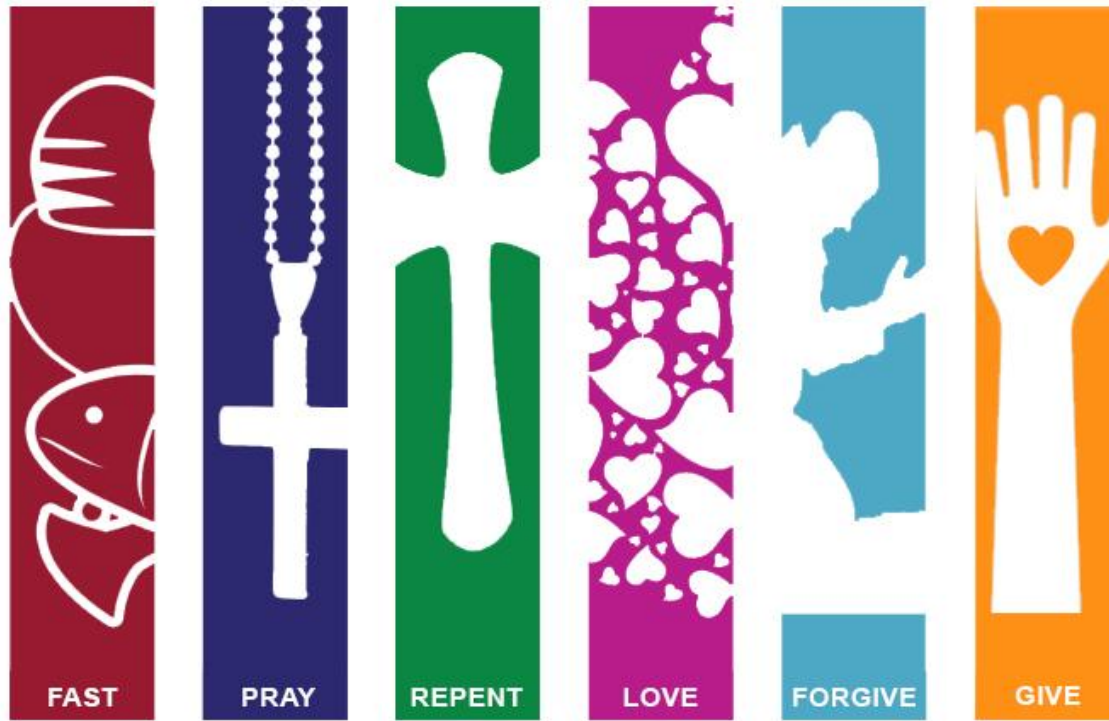




LENT





LENT



This Sunday's Gospel – 5th Sunday of Lent Year A (John 11:1-45)

At that time: A certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to him, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' After saying these things, he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

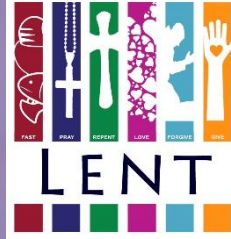
Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.





Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?'



Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be a smell, for he has been dead 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 lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.



The word of God

Prayer One

The Sign of the Cross

Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



Reflection

Our theme this week is Lazarus, because the Gospel story revolves around a man Who was raised from the dead.



Raising someone from the dead is a work of God. Only God can restore someone back to life when he or she dies. The faith of Martha and Mary and the people around had moved Jesus to help his friend Lazarus. And Jesus brought him to life.

We all die as we are all mortals. For Christians, death is the not the end of everything. Death changes life and does not end. When one dies and stops living in this earthly life, he or she will live again. We live in the Lord if we believe that we will live again only in the Lord.

This belief gives us hope even in very dark times, especially in times like this. This Gospel hints to the story of Jesus' own death and resurrection, showing the transformative power of God.

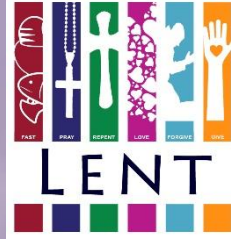
Final Prayer



LOVING FATHER...

Let us pray for our beloved dead, especially the forgotten ones. We pray for those who are living in fear, anxiety and grief right now. May the Lord guide them into the way of peace, calm and hope.

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.



Prayer Two

The Sign of the Cross

**Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Reflection

*Lazarus was given new life in a literal sense.
But people sometimes need the chance to
start their lives anew in a metaphorical
way...*





Forty-one years ago this week a Russian woman walked into the American Embassy in India and formally asked for Asylum...a chance to start her life again

When people ask a country for asylum, it is because they have become afraid of their own country. Maybe because they don't feel safe, or maybe because their beliefs are being persecuted. What was different about this particular woman, though, was that she wasn't just anybody. She was the daughter of Joseph Stalin, who had ruled the Soviet Union for almost 30 years. Her defection from the Soviet Union to its greatest enemy at the time - the United States - naturally caused a huge uproar in her homeland. When she arrived in the United States she denounced her Father's regime and eventually took American citizenship.

Sometimes we have to walk away from things that we are very attached to. Maybe because we know they're holding us back. Or maybe because they're just not right for us.





Final Prayer

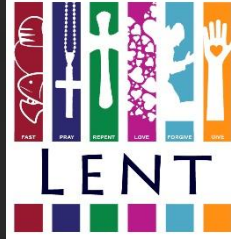
God our Father, help us to have the courage to walk away from everything in our lives that isn't good for us. Anger, hatred, fear, sin, laziness... everything else that is holding us back.

In all things, help us to ask ourselves what you would do.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

In the name of the Father and of the Son...





Prayer Three

The Sign of the Cross

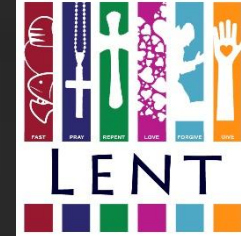
Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Reflection:

*This week we celebrate the feast day of
St Oscar Romero - 24th March*



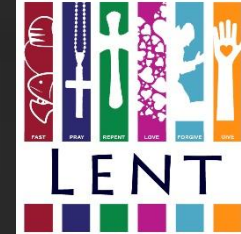
Oscar Romero's life has been a huge inspiration to many people (I even named my son after him!). But today his words seem more relevant than ever



“Aspire not to have more but to be more, not to grab everything but to give abundantly to others”

Take a moment to reflect on what this means to you right now...





Final Prayer

St Oscar Romero...

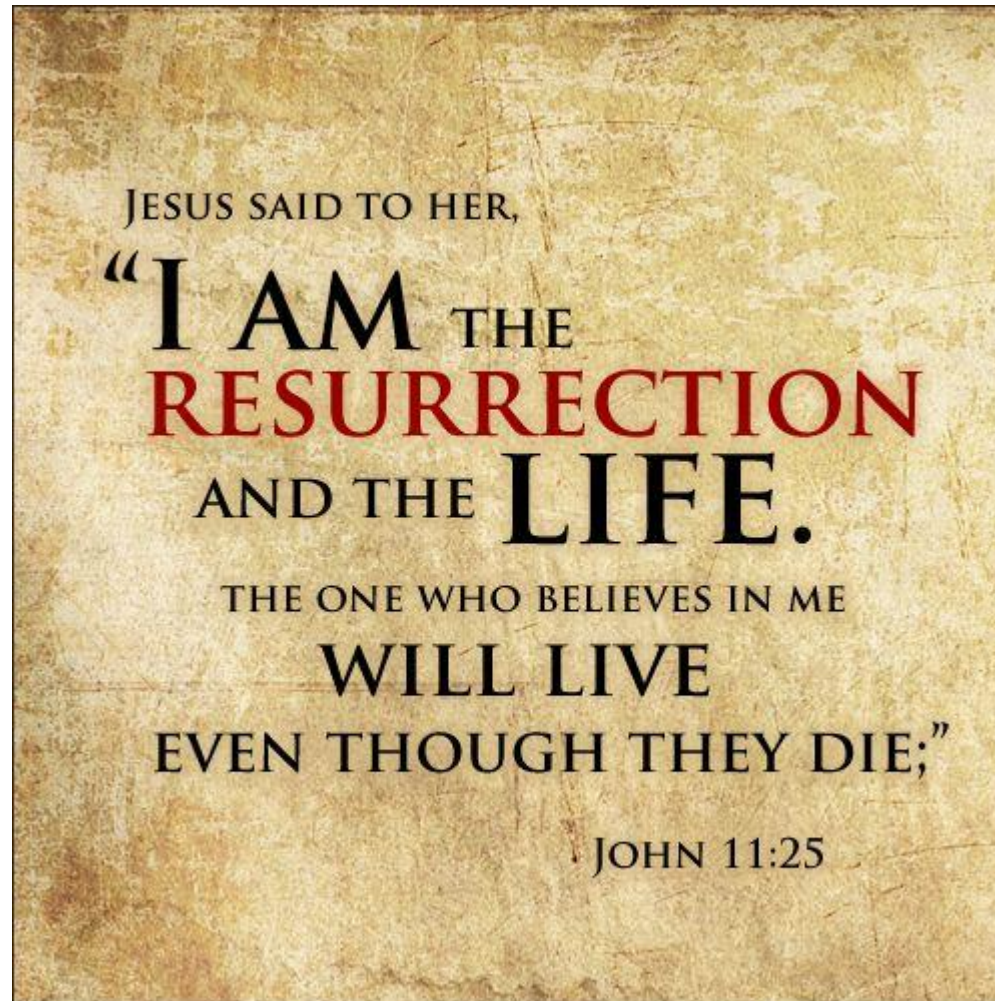
Pray for us...

Our Father, who art in heaven...

**In the name of the Father and of
the Son...**



Final Thought...



***After the break the theme is:
Peace be with you***