

COLLECT: By your help we beseech you, lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out love for the world, your son handed himself over to death. Through our lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

HOMILY FOR THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Dear friends in Christ, the psalm (psalm 130) of today is so interesting and has come to us at an opportune time; particularly the first two verses: “ out of the depth I cry to you o lord, lord hear my voice, o let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.” This is a cry from the depth of pain, the cry of Mary and Martha when they found that their brother was ill, the cry of the suffering men and women throughout history, our own cry when we pass through moments of intense suffering and pain, our cry to God in this moment that the pandemic corona virus is ravaging our world.

Dear friends in Christ, when Martha and Mary found themselves in the desolation caused by the sickness of Lazarus, they ran to Christ for help; even when Lazarus died, they did not give up completely. They still poured out their sorrow to him. Thus, Martha told Jesus: “If you were here my brother would not have died and even now whatever you ask from God, he will give you.” A perfect demonstration of faith in Christ! she is a model of true faith. We are challenged to imitate her. This story has been shared to make us have faith in Christ.

The feeling of desolation, the feeling of being alone and been abandoned felt by Martha and Mary is one experienced by many of us at different points in our lives. The story of these two women tells us that in the hour of grief, we should prayerfully turn to God with expectant faith

hoping that he will hear us. God is not absent in our suffering; he is always present to us. In the face of our present pain and in all our challenges, we must commend ourselves to God and abandon ourselves to his care for he is our strength in weakness. He is a faithful friend who comes to us in the height of our grief, shares our sorrows, gives us hope and surrounds us with his love and support.

Finally, my dear people of God, the church building is closed but the church, the mystical body of Christ which you are, is not closed. I therefore charge you to remain opened to the care and love of God and to follow judiciously the instructions given by the experts on the corona virus. May our God who in the first reading, brought the Israelites out of the grave of their exile to their own land, and also brought Lazarus back to life, bring us out of this pandemic destroying humanity. May he protect those who take care of the infected ones and help us to always trust him. Amen.

**SINCE WE CANNOT RECEIVE COMMUNION PHYSICALLY, WE NOW PRAY THE ACT OF
SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.