

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish
5th Sunday of Lent
29th March 2020



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THE DEEP END

Come forth Lazarus

In today's Gospel Jesus is surrounded by a culture of death. The disciples are afraid to go back to Bethany, the Jews want to stone Jesus to death, Mary and Martha are distraught over the death of their brother Lazarus, and Lazarus himself lies bound in the darkness of the tomb. It appears as if there is no hope. Jesus weeps for his friend and for those around him.

Yet, surrounded by a culture of death and despair, Jesus gives compassion and new life to those in turmoil. It is easy to say that nothing can be done when we are faced with difficult situations in our own lives. Yet Jesus says '*Lazarus, come forth*' and to the people he says '*Unbind him, let him go.*' It is a message for all of us to come away from a culture of death; to help unbind one another and to allow ourselves to emerge from the tomb. We are called to take away the stone. Today's Gospel is a story of liberation. Jesus gives a new insight into the power of faith over death. It is an active faith, one that urges us on to work for change and new life.

'What did you do while the planet was plundered? What did you do as the earth was unravelling? Surely you did something as the seasons started failing? Surely you did something as the mammals, reptiles and birds were all dying? Did you fill the streets with protest when democracy was stolen? What did you do once you knew?'

Weekly Collection: \$ 110

IN THE PARISH

**AS PER CARDINAL JOHN DIRECTIVE ALL PARISH GATHERINGS
HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED**

**COMING
UP**

PARISH NEWSLETTER

While the public gatherings are suspended the Parish will continue to be issued each week and distributed as widely as possible by email out and posted on the Parish website.



DAILY OFFERING OF SUPPORT AND REFLECTION

During this time of self-isolation and quiet we are sending each day a reflection to all those on our Parish Database whose email address we have on file there. This is a separate list from the distribution list for the delivery of the Newsletter. If you are NOT getting this daily message please email the office and we will add your contact details to our Parish Database. We have tried to update the lists but may have missed yours, or have an out of date email address



PARISH OFFICE

Though Jovena our Parish Administrator is self-isolating and not coming to the Presbytery, I am endeavouring to keep the administration of the Parish continuing in her absence. Please feel free to call, or send an email, if I can be of assistance with administrative matters



UPDATE ON COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

See the Parish website for the latest update and directives from Cardinal John with regard to Parish activities during this Covid-19 incident

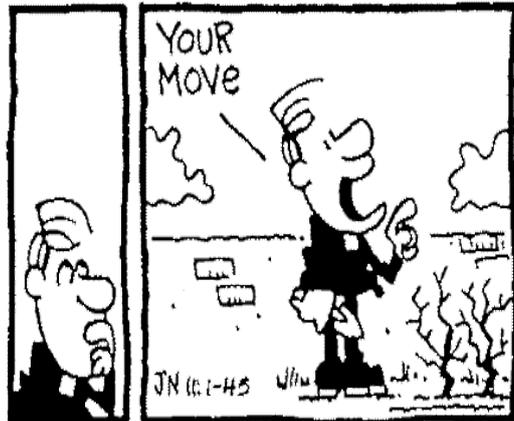
THE LITTLE WHITE BOOK is meant to help you enjoy six minutes of prayer each day during the 50 days of the Easter season. Reflections will be based on the Acts of the Apostles and the early Church. This Little Book has been carefully crafted to help you explore the depths of Scripture and deepen your relationship with Christ. There are 15 copies available at the Parish Office at Heretaunga at \$6 per book. We can email these to you during this time if you would like.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (**RITE II**) scheduled for next weekend on Sunday 29th March has been suspended. Having moved to Level 4 Rite I is also unavailable due to travel and contact restrictions. Father Tony is available by phone 04 97242





PLANNED GIVING – IRD CHARITABLE DONATION RECEIPTS

The New Tax year begins on Wednesday the 1st of April. Over the next couple of weeks the Parish Office will be preparing and checking the tax Inland Revenue charitable donation receipts for 2019-20. These will be available by end of April early May.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER all who are sick and unwell especially Mary Duncan, those affected by the COVID-19 virus, and those who are lonely and worried. *We pray also for those who have died recently including, Noeline Casey, Sister Catherine Hannan, Ian Simpson, Fr Pat McCann SM, and Donald O’Grady. We also pray for those whose anniversary occurs at this time. May they rest in peace.*



Sunday Readings		Sunday Readings	
29th March Fifth Sunday of Lent		5th April Palm Sunday	
		Gospel	Matthew 21: 1-11
First Reading	Ezekiel 37:12-14	First Reading	Isaiah 50:4-7
Second Reading	Romans 8:8-11	Second Reading	Philippians 2: 6-11
Gospel	John 11: 1-45	Gospel	Matthew 26: 14-27, 66