

Lent 5A 2014

Christ Our Resurrection and Our Life

The Gospels we have heard the past two weeks have been very long, but they have also been very rich. Two weeks ago, for example, we heard the Gospel of the Samaritan Woman to whom Jesus promised the life-giving water of God's own Spirit. Last week we heard the Gospel of the Man Born Blind to whom Jesus, the Light of the World, gave the gift of sight. And today we heard the Gospel of the Jesus raising Lazarus and giving him the gift of life.

Each of these Gospels tells us who Jesus is, and who we are. We are the Samaritan Woman thirsty for something or someone that will truly satisfy us, and Jesus is the one who gives us the life-quenching water of God's own Spirit. We are the man blind from birth, dwelling in the darkness of our sinfulness, and Jesus is the light of the world that shows us the way to God. We are Lazarus who lies in the darkness of the grave, and Jesus is the resurrection and the life who raises us to new life.

These three gospels are especially appropriate for this Lenten season, for it is during this time of Lent that people throughout the world are preparing to receive the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation, for the first time, at the Easter Vigil. Still others are preparing to enter into full communion with the church. Here at St. Mary's, for example, the members of this year's RCIA class

(Tammy O'Dowd, Joseph Shiman, and Timothy Scully) will undergo their third scrutiny today. Then, at the Easter Vigil, they will enter into full communion with the Church.

The Gospels of these past three weeks speak directly to their situation; for they are about to receive the life-giving water of the Spirit. They are about to have their eyes opened to the light of Christ's gospel. Like Lazarus, they will be raised up to new life at Easter, and to eternal life at the resurrection of the dead.

But these readings also speak to us who were baptized as infants. At that time we did not know what happened to us. But today, we do. Today we know that at our Baptism our eyes were open to the light of Christ, and we received the life-giving water of God's Spirit. Today we know that the Spirit of God gave us the power to live a new life. Today we know that as St. Paul says in today's second reading the Spirit of God is our promise of eternal resurrection life.

As we witness these three candidates affirm their desire for the sacraments that will give them the gift of the Spirit and fill them with the light of Christ, let us remember what happened to us when we received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation. And as we remember what happened to us, let us renew and reaffirm our faith in Christ, the giver of the Spirit, the Light of the World, the Resurrection and the life.