

**Church of the Divine Love**

**FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

**MARCH 22, 2026 10:15 A.M.**

**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

*Please observe silence      Alleluias are omitted during Lent*

A Morning Prayer

Heavenly Father, Thank You for allowing us to see a brand-new day. For this, we give You Praise! Lord, we lift up our concerns, worries, and burdens before You, knowing that You are a compassionate and caring God. Give us the strength and courage to face our trials, knowing that You are with us in every step of the way. Fill us with Your peace that surpasses all understanding, calming our hearts and reassuring us of Your unfailing presence. Deliver us from the evil one and keep us safe from all harm, known and unknown. In the precious name of Jesus, Amen.

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn #495 - **Hail, thou once despised Jesus!**

Opening Acclamation For Lent page 351

The Decalogue page 350

The Confession page 353

THE WORD OF GOD

\_ Kyrie page 356

Collect for 5 Lent page 219

First Lesson: **Ezekiel 37:1-14** *(pages 714 in the Bible)*

Psalm 130 page 784

Second Lesson: **Romans 8:6-11** *(page 982)*

Gradual Hymn #665 - **All my hop in God is founded**

Gospel: **John 11:1-45** (page 934)

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form III page 387

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #671 - **Amazing grace! how sweet the sound**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)

Hymn during Consecration (on facing page)

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

Communion Hymn #335 - **I am the bread of life**

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace page 815

Prayer for the Parish page 817

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #508 - **Breathe on me, Breath of God**

Dismissal

## Sermon Sunday March 22, 2026

Ezekiel 37: 1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8: 6-11; John 11: 1-45.

**Beloved in Christ,** Lazarus is dead," Jesus tells the disciples. It's not hard to imagine the questions that might be running through the minds of the disciples and the hearts of Mary and Martha. They are the same kind of questions we ask ourselves and each other whenever life is interrupted and changed in ways we do not want. They are the same kind of questions we ask when circumstances show us just how difficult, fragile, and beautiful life really is.

Why? How could this happen? What's next for me? Is this an ending or a beginning? Could it be both? How do I move forward? How do I make sense of what has happened? What will life be like now? Why didn't it work out the way I wanted? What could or should I have done differently? Is there life after this? Why didn't God do something? Every one of you could add to this list. We all have our questions, thousands of them. The ultimate question, the one that lies behind and grounds all our other questions, is the one God asks Ezekiel. "Mortal, can these bones live again?" That's what we are really asking. That's what I want to know. Don't you? That question is the valley that cuts through the center of our lives. And yet, it's not a simple yes or no kind of question. Neither is it answered once and for all. It's a question we live with and ask over and over. Every time life sets before me those kinds of questions I am reminded, once again, that I live with more questions than answers, and the answers I do have no longer seem to carry the weight and authority they once did. Our lives are filled with unanswered questions. My experience is that the unanswered questions of life tend to leave us disappointed; disappointed in life itself, in ourselves, in another, or sometimes in God. Disappointment is wrapped up in and bound by our unmet expectations. That's where Mary and Martha are in today's gospel. They are disappointed. "Lord, if you have been here, my brother would not have died," they both say separately to Jesus. Even the crowd that follows Mary is disappointed. "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" they ask. I know that disappointment and I'll bet you do too. We want answers, explanations, and understanding.

Jesus does not offer answers or explanations to Mary and Martha, or to us. Instead, he uses our disappointment as an agency for transformation. Jesus seems to know that disappointment is inescapable, necessary, and even a faithful response to life's circumstances. He neither criticizes nor ridicules Martha and Mary for their disappointment. Instead, he uses it as an opening and entry point into their lives. There's something honest, heartfelt, and real about Mary and Martha's words of disappointment to Jesus. They are offering and making themselves available to him. They rethink what they know about life, death, and resurrection. They risk smelling the stench of death. They are walking in that valley that cuts through the center of their lives. To attempt to insulate ourselves from disappointment and demand once and for all kind of answers to life's questions is to close ourselves to

the vulnerabilities that make possible real life, love, intimacy, and relationships with God or with another. It limits what we are willing to risk giving or receiving. It leaves the stone in place over Lazarus' tomb, and refuses to consider God's question to Ezekiel.

While we might want to escape our disappointments, life wants to use them. Life will not waste our disappointments, and Jesus always stands in the middle of life. Disappointment calls into question our assumptions about life, ourselves, each other, and God. Disappointment asks us to reassess ourselves and our inner world. It is the first step in freeing us from misguided assumptions. It breaks old patterns of seeing and relating that have become hardened and less than life sustaining. It opens our eyes to a deeper way of seeing. Jesus uses our disappointment in the unanswered questions of life to invite us to a larger foundational reality than what we create for ourselves and project onto the world. Isn't that what he's doing with Mary and Martha? "I am the resurrection and life." "Take away the stone." "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" "Lazarus come out." "Unbind him and let him go." With those words Jesus is holding before Martha and Mary the valley that cuts through the center of their lives. "Mortal, can these bones live again?"

The great question before us and Mary and Martha is whether we experience our disappointment as an opportunity for seeing and engaging our lives and world in new, different, and life-giving ways or whether we experience it only as a wound that makes us retreat from further participation. It's a question we answer every day. It's a question Jesus answered throughout his life. Don't think that Jesus did not know disappointment. He surely did. He knew disappointment in the death of Lazarus, the crucifixion, Peter's drawn sword and violence, Judas' betrayal, the disciples sleeping in the garden, the way his Father's house had been turned into a den of robbers, his disciples arguing about who was the greatest, the disciples' misunderstanding of who he is, the world's refusal to receive him, and in a myriad of other ways. Every disappointment held before him, as it does for us, the choice between engaging or retreating from the world and our lives. He refused to be stopped by his disappointments. Instead, he used them as entry points into our lives. They became points of identification with us. His every disappointment become one more step deeper into the valley that cuts through the center of our lives.

So let me ask you again. What is the valley that cuts through the center of your life? Whatever it is it's a place through which Jesus has walked and shown the way forward. It is not the dark place we often think it is. It's an aperture into the light, a path that opens to new life, a clearer way of seeing, a truer sense of ourselves, and a deeper experience of Christ. It becomes the place of our unbinding and being let go. In this valley the question mark of life becomes God's exclamation point: the exclamation points of love, the exclamation points of life and light, the exclamation point of mercy and forgiveness, the exclamation point of wisdom, beauty, and generosity, the exclamation point of hope, healing, and compassion, and ultimately, the exclamation point of God's yes to you and your life. "Mortal, can these bones live again?" The answer to that question echoes throughout the valley that cuts through the center of your life. Yes, they can! Yes, they do! Yes, they will! Whatever stinks in your life, hear the voice of Jesus calling to you, "Come out of there!" Jesus is waiting, weeping for you to receive his love and forgiveness. Jesus is

offering you a new chance at life – life that is abundant and filled with peace. It might be completely new territory for you, but you don't have to go there alone. We may not have all the answers, we may feel helpless, but we have this hope: Christ has overcome death and sin, and offers us new life in him, if we believe in him. **Amen!**

Enclosed are Easter flower memorial envelopes. Please return by Palm Sunday. Make checks payable to Church of the Divine Love Altar Guild.

5 LENT`	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
	11:15 AM	VESTRY MEETING
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP

THE SUNDAY OF THE PASSION/PALM SUNDAY

10::15 AM	LITURGY OF THE PALMS
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Beginning in the parish hall with procession to the church

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE I

Following the service there will be a celebration to honor and thank Fr. Jean for his devotion to our parish and church family.

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Dana Kenn	Jess Berbeck
Coffee Hour	Judy Golden	Celebration for Fr. Jean

SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK, DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

## PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Martin
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Joseph
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Warren
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Scottie Credendino	Michael	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Jill
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Aika
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Jan
Timothy Treasure	Vincent & Barbara	Sandy
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jay
Gladys Hadija	Sophia	Aidan
Michael & Family	Donna A	Mo
Michelle & Family	Christopher	Annie
Moises Parra	Misael Varas	Cary

Samantha

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.  
Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to the prayer list during the week,  
email Janet Croft at [jmc220@optonline.net](mailto:jmc220@optonline.net).









