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**Newsletter for the week commencing 28th/29th March 2020: Fifth Sunday of Lent (A)**

**First Reading: Ezekiel 37: 12-14**

**Psalm:**  129

**Second Reading: The letter of St Paul to the Romans 8: 8-11**

**Gospel: John 11: 1-45**

**Father John writes:**

It is an odd experience to celebrate Mass without any congregation. As I have grown older in the priesthood, I have realised how much more I get from the Scripture passages we share together at our morning Mass than I do when I read it on my own. Somehow it comes alive for me when we are sharing the Word of God together at the celebration of the Eucharist. I pray aloud the prayers of the Missal in our Church, but it feels a bit hollow - we should be praying these prayers together in our hearts. That word - the Eucharist - becomes really important. The congregation and priest are supposed to be focused together on the Lectern and the altar. It is an action -we are joined in giving thanks to God together. That is the very meaning of the word ‘Eucharist’ - to give thanks.

That is why I miss you all - especially on Sunday, but also every time I celebrate Mass in my particular role as your priest. I would not say I feel ‘lonely’, because we share together the truth that Jesus is truly present in the Tabernacle in the Church. But nonetheless you are missed, - it is just like we bring with us to the Eucharist in prayer our deceased family members. In the same way I bring you, living members of our worshipping community, to every celebration of the Mass. It is just that I long for the time when we will be physically present together to share in the great action of the Eucharist - then we will pray out loud to God the Father “ through Jesus Christ, with Him and in Him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.” Amen

**Your Prayers are asked for:**

**Those recently deceased:**

**Those ill or infirm:** Joe Adams, Ellie Lawrence, Anne Bryant, Eric Booth, Patricia Hook, Elena Peck (senior), Marjorie Dumbleton, Josie Payne, Joe Venables and all those self-isolating or suffering from COVID-19

**Those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time:** Sheila Newington, Don Woodman, Gladys Bennett, Angela Hill, Evelyn Mary Hargreaves, Raymond Ellis, John Hill, Kathleen Lawrence, Peter Schouten and Alex Hatch.

Things to consider…

**New Pilgrim Path Website of the Week.** Pause to review your day online in the presence of God with a new take on a 500-year old prayer.  The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God’s presence and discern his direction for us. Developed by St Ignatius Loyola, it is central to Ignatian spirituality. Discover the power of this simple, life-changing way of praying through six short online sessions, called the ‘Lunchtime Examen’, available at www.newpilgrimpath.ie

**Websites to visit:**

Redemptorist Publications (www.rpbooks.co.uk) In response to the decision that all public Masses are to cease, Redemptorist Publications are delighted to be able to bring the Sunday Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R. into your into home every Sunday. We pray that this will enable the faithful to feel connected, to their faith and church community, during this difficult time.

The Mass takes place in a tiny chapel and is a lovely way to join in prayer and feel part of the church.

The Catholic Church: Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales: - lots of interesting articles plus Mass online.

Our website (address at the top!) for lots of information.

Another site worth looking at is www.tenterdencofe.co.uk. It is St Mildred’s website and their daily bulletin is useful.

An inspirational book to read is “The Salt Path” by Raynor Winn. It is about a couple who lose everything – home, livelihood and health. Sounds depressing, doesn’t it? But it is an uplifting read, full of humour. Give it a go! Let me know what you think of it.

Stay cheerful…

.. When fish are in schools, they sometimes take debate.

.. A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.

.. The batteries were given out free of charge.

.. A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.

**Please stick to the guidelines/rules set down by the government regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**It is important for the health of everyone.**

**Having spoken to an NHS nurse today they are bracing themselves at William Harvey Hospital for the tidal wave of cases in a couple of weeks’ time. Let’s pray that doesn’t happen.**

**Take care of yourselves and your loved ones.**

**God bless.**