

Deacon Tony's Homily for the Third Scrutiny – April 2, 2017

Lives in the flesh and life in the Spirit. From our baptism we are called to be aware of our two lives. We are all aware of the draw towards things of the flesh. There are certain things that we require to live in Irvine today. It requires working and spending much time acquiring things like housing, education, transportation, certain clothing, etc, etc.

Sometimes it requires so much time that there is not much left for our spiritual health and well-being. Sometimes we have to narrow it down to one hour a week and even less if we come to Mass at the last minute or late. By the time we get there, we are stepping over people during the reading of the Word of God and causing more of a distraction than a reverence. This is not conducive to having a healthy spiritual relationship with Jesus.

We look at the deaths in today's readings as examples of spiritual death. When Jesus ordered the rock to be rolled aside in order to call to His friend Lazarus to come out, He told them to untie him and let him free. Jesus desires to free us from the bondage of sin.

We get tied up in the things of the flesh and are prevented from knowing what is real.

The rock is a symbol of the sins that prevent us from enjoying a truly spiritual relationship with Jesus Our Lord. We have to get past the barriers.

Martha clearly witnessed that Jesus is God when she agreed with His statement:

“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he dies will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me, will never die.”

Our parish office offers many opportunities to participate in things that can make a difference in understanding who Jesus really is.

We celebrate daily Mass and communion, which is a perfect way to begin each day. What a good way to witness Jesus in our lives.

We offer reconciliation every Saturday or whenever needed by appointment. Sorrow for our sins and a plan to avoid near occasions of sin, will make sure that we stay spiritually healthy.

Adult formation classes and Bibles studies keep our minds clear and centered on Jesus.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday evening at 6:30 pm, and all day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month offers a great opportunity to listen to God and make Him a bigger part of your life.

The parish offers opportunities to put your faith into action with some of our organizations like St Vincent DePaul Society, Knights of Columbus, YLI, always ready to help the poor and needy.

We offer a renewal weekend at the end of April that will take you away from distractions of the flesh for 30 hours (including 8 hours of restful sleep).

“The scrutinies are meant to uncover, and then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. For the scrutinies are rites celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life.”

What a beautiful witness to our church, having adults who have prepared over these past months, in order to proclaim their faith in the risen Lord. I hope that the entire congregation can pray silently in your hearts and rededicate your lives to strengthening your spiritual bond with Jesus Our Savior. If we are more aware of this spiritual life that Jesus is calling us to, we can truly be freed from the call of the flesh.

“LAZARUS COME OUT!”

This is our call as well. Catholic parishioner come out to a life of freedom from bondage.