

St. Peter's, Holy Guardian Angels, and St. John the Baptist Parishes
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March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Mass Readings

The **First Reading** from the Old Testament prophet *Ezekiel 37:12-14* is taken from the chapter about pouring forth the Spirit upon the "dry bones" in the valley of his vision. The prophet speaks of restoration through an act of God through the Spirit and that it was through him that the people first were saved from their oppression in Egypt, and by his power they will be saved again and restored as the people of God. The symbolic meaning of the reading is the resurrection of the people to new life, a theme clearly reiterated in succeeding apocalyptic literature and finally present in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The **Second Reading** from *St. Paul to the Romans 8:8-11* states that through Christ the whole person of the believer is saved, raised up, and redeemed. The realm of the flesh is the realm to be left behind, and the realm of the Spirit is where true life is to be found. But there is no hellenistic dichotomy here between flesh and spirit since the believer lives with the Spirit of God enfleshed in his body so that his whole person will live in conformity with that Spirit. The indwelling of the Spirit refers to the baptism of the person and his consequent moral life.

The **Gospel** reading from *St. John 11:1-45*, opens up in front of us a scene of unprecedented sorrow. The Lord Jesus receives the message from the sisters of Lazarus who, when confronted with the gravity of his condition, tried the only thing possible, they turned to the Lord of who it was said: '*Everything He does is good, he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak*' (Mk 7:37). It is the cry of each one of us who would like their loved ones to live forever without ever leaving us.

The Lord Jesus, inexplicably, waited a further two days before heading for Lazarus' home. Even then, He only left with His disciples when he divinely knew of His friend's death. This particular detail from the Gospel tells us that the Word of God was made Man for the love of all of us. Also that His look of love is always upon us waiting for that meeting of immense joy that will happen in eternity.

Upon Jesus' arrival in Bethany there was a new apparently inexplicable development in the story. First Mary, then her sister Martha and behind them all the Jews who were united with them, converge on Jesus with the certainty that if there was a response to their sorrow it would come from Him. They were not irreligious people who were looking to Jesus for a solution. They profoundly accepted Israel's faith in the final Resurrection and so even this event was not ultimately inexplicable. In fact Martha said to the Lord, '*I know that he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day*' (Jn 11:24). However, knowing that in relation to the Lord, nothing that was authentically human in them or their cry of sorrow be would be lost. Prior to that, their only consolation came from the eschatological faith of the time.

In this last sign, worked by the Lord before His triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, everything seems to flow to that 'new reality' inaugurated by Emmanuel, God with us. Sharing our existence, Jesus had loved us with a supreme passion, with that virginal love that doesn't seek to possess the heart of the other, but to love it in truth with delicate insistence right up to sacrificing Himself for us. In this infinite delicacy and attention to everyone, He was able to be moved by

those who were linked to Him by ties of the most profound friendship who understood that it could not be anything but God's presence amongst them. *'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. Do you believe this? She said to him, Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.'* (Jn 11:25-27)

Christ then performed the great miracle of Lazarus' resurrection. He announced, through the work of the Father, that He, Himself, God made man, is the Resurrection and the Life. He is also the Lord of biological life. His voice can reach those who, like Lazarus, have exceeded the threshold of four days from their death and arrived at the point where bodily corruption commences. Faced with this sign, the words with which He foretold His Resurrection become clearer: *'I lay down my life, that I may take it again'* (Jn 10:17). He really can *'take up [His life] again'* as He is the Word of Life. If Lazarus' resurrection didn't stop the Lord's beloved friend from embracing *'our sister death'*—to use St Francis' expression—when God finally called him again from this life, then how much greater is the Life that the Lord has earned for Lazarus and everyone of us in the Paschal Mystery that we are preparing to celebrate a few days from now.

It was Martha and Mary's faith, even when confronted with Lazarus' death that gave rise to the extraordinary miracle worked by Christ. This is not only a consoling story narrated in the letters of the Gospel, but it is also accessible to us today in the Church from the day of our Baptism until when we are incorporated to Him by means of the Spirit that He has given to us. *'If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.'* (Rom 8:11)
Most Holy Mary, the mother of the Risen One, give us the grace to look towards and live the light of this extraordinary reality—the promise of Resurrection in Christ. Amen.

—From the Congregation for the clergy

Schedule of Mass Intentions

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

SJB **4:00 PM**
+ Lucille Boudreau
Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 3:30 PM

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

SP **9:00 PM**
+ Claire LeBlanc

Friday, March 27, 2026

Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 10:15.
HGA **11:00 AM**
+ Blaise Briand

Saturday, March 28, 2026

SJB 4:00 PM

+ Fred & Geline Doary

SP 5:30 PM

+ Gaetan Lebeau

Sunday, March 29, 2026

SH 9:00 AM

HGA 11:00 AM

+ Manny Mombourquette

Receipts

No Masses on March 14th for SJB & SP due to inclement weather

St. John the Baptist

March 7, 2026

Envelopes & Loose \$ 830.00

Total \$ **830.00**

St. Peter's

March 7, 2026

Envelopes & Loose \$ 732.00

Total \$ **732.00**

Holy Guardian Angels

March 15, 2026

Envelopes & Loose \$ 847.00

Candles 33.80

Flowers 20.00

Total \$ **900.80**

Community News

Pontifical Collection for the Church in the Holy Land on Good Friday, April 3, 2026

The Good Friday Collection helps to maintain the Church of the Holy Land by providing educational, pastoral, and social support of Catholic youth and families committed to living their faith in the land where Christ lived, and by maintaining the Holy Sites that are so important to the faith of Christians everywhere. At the request of the Holy See, this Pontifical Collection will be taken during the Good Friday celebration on April 3, 2026.

Those who are unable to attend the service, or who prefer to contribute online, may use Credit Cards, Interact, or Canadahelps, accessible at: WWW.commissariat.ca, in the “Support Us” link.

Sacred Heart: Fish Cake Supper - Friday April 3rd, 4:30 PM In or Take Out - Fish Cakes, Homemade Beans, Biscuits, and homemade chow. Cost \$12.00, Johnstown Parish Hall.

TARTAN DAY

APRIL 6, 2026

Come and join us as we celebrate Tartan Day! St. Peter's United Church Hall 2:30 PM
A talk about Tartan Day (originated in Nova Scotia) TEA, TUNES, TREATS and
Toe--tapping dance demonstrations! Hosted by: Richmond MacAdian Ceilidh Dancers.