WEPPING with those who

Catholics and non-Catholics alike admire the simplicity and spontaneity of Pope Francis. Usually seen as smiling as he gives a thumbs up or poses with pilgrims for “groupies,” or with a solemn look while celebrating Mass, the Pontiff has likewise shed tears in public. In 2014, he sobbed after listening to the story of Cardinal Ernest Simoni who was tortured and imprisoned for his faith under the Communist rule in Albania. In his apostolic visit to the Philippines in 2015, he shared the pain of the former homeless girl Glyzelle Palomar who asked why God allows children to suffer, saying her tearful query points to a vital Christian lesson. “Certain realities of life are seen only with eyes that are cleansed by tears... If you do not know how to weep, you are not a good Christian,” remarked the Pontiff.

Pope Francis has urged peoples to beg for the “grace of tears,” a gift often attributed to saints. Such charism, according to him, is crucial when contemplating on the sacrifices of Christ on the cross, when asking pardon for sins, especially indifference, and when praying for and empathizing with others.

God expresses true sorrow for his people (Jer 14:17; Ps 34:18). Jesus, the Son of God, sheds tears at the death of his friend Lazarus (Gospel Reading). This shows that it is perfectly fine to have a good cry, or weep once in a while. Scripture also notes other instances when Jesus weeps—for faithless and unrepentant Jerusalem (Lk 19:41-44), or in his prayer and supplications to the Father (Heb 5:7). Weeping is healthy and helpful; it relieves us, it improves our vision. It prepares us once again for mission.

What is noteworthy in Jesus’ weeping is that it is selfless: he weeps not only for himself but for others. This is what St. Paul refers as life “in the Spirit” (Second Reading); it is to go beyond one’s personal or egotistical concerns. Jesus weeps because those whom he loves weep. His energy is primarily used for compassion and empathy. Jesus knows that God will eventually restore what we have lost. Nevertheless, he takes our pain and sorrow seriously, enters and shares our grief and darkness, and from there, brings forth light and life, “mercy and fullness of redemption.”

Salvation knows no shortcuts. Faith and cooperation are keys. Just as God blew the breath of life into clay in forming human beings, so will he restore our inanimate and “dried up” bodies because of sin and suffering to new life (First Reading). We must trust the process or the workings of the Spirit in all of us.

To weep for one’s self is human; to weep for others, divine. In Jesus, God and humanity weep together. It is the shared tears, the compassionate sharing of vulnerability, that made Lazarus step out of the tomb, unbound, and alive again.

— Fr. Angelo Paolo O. Asprer, SSP

WHO WEEP

Ecumenism in Daily Life
Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

Near the conclusion of the Vatican II document on ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio 23), the Council praises how our “separated brethren” authentically live their Christian faith. “The daily life of these brethren is nourished by their faith in Christ and strengthened by the grace of Baptism and hearing the Word of God. This shows itself in their private prayer, their meditation on the Bible, in their Christian family life, and in the worship of a community gathered together to praise God.”

Their faith in Christ bears fruit in praise and thanksgiving for the blessings received from the hands of God. Among them, too, is a strong sense of justice and a true charity toward their neighbors. This active faith has been responsible for many organizations for the relief of spiritual and material distress, the furtherance of the education of youth, the improvement of the social conditions of life, and the promotion of peace throughout the world.”

Indeed, both genuine ecumenical discussion and concrete practice may profitably begin by noting these authentic Christian practices and virtues; then, all Christians can commit themselves to giving “common witness to the Christian faith concretely lived in daily life.
Entrance Antiphon
(Cf. Ps 43 [42]: 1-2)
(Rectified when there is no opening song.)

Give me justice, O God, and please my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

Greeting
(The sign of the cross is made here.)
P — The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
All — And with your spirit.

Introduction
(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)
P — In our Gospel today, Jesus raises Lazarus to life, proving that, indeed, he is the resurrection and the life. He proves his faithfulness to the Will of the Father even at the cost of his own life. By dying on the cross, in his powerlessness, Jesus gives us the greatest good—eternal life.

Penitential Act
P — Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (Pause)
P — You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Kyrie, eleison.
All — Kyrie, eleison.
P — You came to call sinners: Christe, eleison.
All — Christe, eleison.
P — You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Kyrie, eleison.
All — Kyrie, eleison.
P — May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
All — Amen.
(The Gloria is omitted)

Collect
P — Let us pray. (Pause)
By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world,
your Son handed himself over to death.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
All — Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading (Ez 37:12-14) (Sit)
This majestic prophecy of a broken people rising from the grave is fulfilled in God's power at work in Jesus calling Lazarus back to life.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel
THUS says the LORD God: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus you shall know that I am the LORD. I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

— The word of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 130)
R — With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD:/ LORD, hear my voice! / Let your ears be attentive/ to my voice in supplication. (R)
2. If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, / LORD, who can stand?/ But with you is forgiveness, / that you may be revered. (R)

Third Reading (Rom 8:8-11) (Sit)
Paul declares that the Holy Spirit who is the gift of the risen Christ to us is the guarantee of our future resurrection.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:
Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

— The word of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

Verse before the Gospel
(11:25a, 26) (Stand)
All — I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will never die.

Gospel (11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45) (Short Form)

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.
P — A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
All — Glory to you, O Lord.

THE SISTERS of Lazarus sent word to Jesus, saying, “Master, the one you love is ill.” When Jesus heard this he said, “This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and
Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two
days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his
disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”

When Jesus arrived, he found
that Lazarus had already been
in the tomb for four days. When
Martha heard that Jesus was coming,
she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha
said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother
would not have died. But even now I
know that whatever you ask of
God, God will give you.” Jesus
said to her, “Your brother will
rise.” Martha said, “I know he
will rise, in the resurrection on
the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am
the resurrection and the life; who
ever 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 Christ, the Son
of God, the one who is coming
into the world.”

He became perturbed
and deeply troubled, and
said, “Where have you laid
him?” They said to him, “Sir,
come and see.” And Jesus wept.
So the Jews said, “See how he
loved him.” But some of them
said, “Could not the one who
opened the eyes of the blind
man have done something so
that this man would not have
died?”

So Jesus, perturbed again,
came to the tomb. It was a
cave, and a stone lay across it.
Jesus said, “Take away
the stone.” Martha, the dead
man’s sister, said to him,
“Lord, by now there will be a
stench; he has been dead for
four days.” Jesus said to her,
“Did I not tell you that if you
believe you will see the glory
of God?” So they took away the
stone. And Jesus raised his eyes
and said, “Father, I thank you
for hearing me. I know that you
always hear me; but because
of the crowd here I have said
this, that they may believe that
you sent me.” And when he had
said this, he cried out in a loud
voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The
dead man came out, tied hand
and foot with burial bands,
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.
So Jesus said to them, “Untie
him and let him go.”

Now many of the Jews who
had come to Mary and seen
what he had done began to
believe in him.

— The Gospel of the Lord.
All — Praise to you, Lord Jesus
Christ.

Homily (Sit)

Profession of Faith (Stand)

All — I believe in God, the
Father almighty, Creator of
heaven and earth, and in Jesus
Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
(At the words that follow, up to
and including the Virgin Mary,
all bow)

who was conceived by the
Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin
Mary, suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, died and
was buried; he descended into
hell; on the third day he
rose again from the dead; he
ascended into heaven, and
is seated at the right hand of
God the Father almighty; from
there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and
life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P — As the celebration of Jesus’
Paschal Mystery approaches,
let us pray to the Father that
we may come to share more
fully in the life Christ brings us
through his suffering, death,
and resurrection. We call on
the Lord:

R — Lord of life, hear our
prayer.

C — That the Church, the
people of God, may radiate
hope to the world ever in agony
because of poverty, terrorism,
natural calamities, ethnic wars,
and man-made disasters, we
pray: (R)

C — That those whose pursuit
of power, wealth, and pleasure
which brings suffering to their
brothers and sisters, may hear
the Lord’s call to conversion,
we pray: (R)

C — That our hearts may be
attuned to prayer, sharing,
understanding, and forgiveness
in celebration of the Paschal
Mystery, we pray: (R)

C — That those who, like
Martha and Mary, suffer the
loss of their beloved ones may
be strengthened by their faith
in Jesus, who is the resurrection
and the life, we pray: (R)

C — Let us pray for the urgent
concerns of our community
and our personal intentions
(pause). We pray: (R)

P — God of life, Jesus our
Lord has overcome death
for us. Help us to rise from
our weakness and despair,
believing that nothing can ever
separate us from your love.

Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

The Liturgy of
The Eucharist

Presentation of the Gifts
(Stand)

P — Pray, brethren...
All — May the Lord accept
the sacrifice at your hands for
the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of
all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P — Hear us, almighty God,
and, having instilled in your
servants the teachings of the
Christian faith, graciously
purify them by the working of
this sacrifice.

Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

Preface: Lazarus

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.
P — Lift up your hearts.
All — We lift them up to the
Lord.
P — Let us give thanks to the
Lord our God.
All — It is right and just.
P — It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For as true man he wept for Lazarus his friend and as eternal God raised him from the tomb, just as, taking pity on the human race, he leads us by sacred mysteries to new life.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty and rejoices in your presence for ever. May our voices, we pray, join with theirs in one chorus of exultant praise, as we acclaim:

All — Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All — Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All — Our Father...
P — Deliver us, Lord...
All — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invocation to Peace

Invocation to Communion (Kneel)

P — Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All — Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Cf. Jn 11:26)

Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.

Prayer after Communion (Stand)

P — Let us pray. (Pause)

We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
All — Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P — Bow down for the blessing. (Pause)

Bestow pardon and peace, O Lord, we pray, upon your faithful, that they may be cleansed from every offense and serve you with untroubled hearts.

Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

P — And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All — Amen.

Dismissal

P — Go forth, the Mass is ended.
All — Thanks be to God.

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