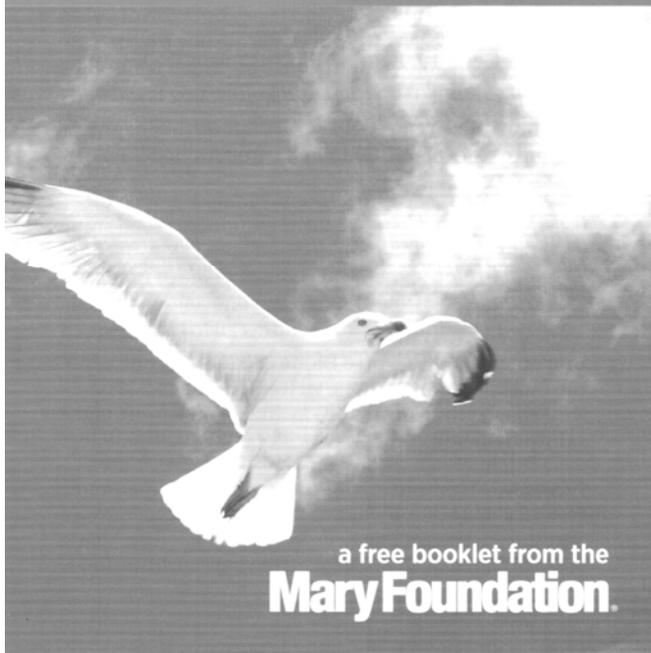


Going Back to Confession

after years or decades

Bud Macfarlane



a free booklet from the
Mary Foundation.

Mon. 04/07 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Cancer**
Feast Saint John Baptist de la Salle, priest
 8:00 AM Mass Coy R. Smith, Sr., Ann., Carol Smith

Tues. 04/08 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Heart Diseases**
Feast Lenten Weekday
 8:00 AM Mass Paul T. Cassarly, Carol Smith

Wed. 04/09 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Arthritis**
Feast Lenten Weekday
 8:00 AM Mass Stanley Wilinski, Dorothy Sagatias
 6:00 PM Mass Denise Keagy, Diane Monnikendan

Thur. 04/10 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Nervous Disorders**
Feast Lenten Weekday
 8:00 AM Mass Rosemarie Simanski, Paul and Emma Kowalski

Fri. 04/11 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Emotional Disorders**
Feast Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr
 8:00 AM Mass Pauline Christlmeier, Miriam and Terry Merritts
 6:00 PM **Stations of the Cross followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

Sat. 04/12 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Diabetes**
Feast Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
 4:30 PM Mass Our Lady of Fatima Parish Family

Sun. 04/13 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Addictions**
Feast Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
 9:00 AM Mass Helen Pufka, Paul and Emma Kowalski
 11:00 AM Mass Louis Mangiacarne, Richard and Marcia Smith

*Lord
 Jesus
 Christ
 Son
 Of
 God
 Have
 Mercy
 On
 Me
 A
 Sinner*

Happy Birthday:
 04/08 Kayla Scalice
 04/14 Lovie McCall

Wedding Anniversaries
 04/07 Paul and Emma Kowalski



*Our Lady of Fatima Pleaded That we
 pray the Holy Rosary Daily
 At O.L.F. before each Mass and privately
 from 8:30am to 7:00pm*

MONEY MATTERS
(Fourth Sunday of Lent March 30, 2014)
 209 people Celebrated Liturgy at O.L.F. contributing \$ 1,911.00 of which \$ 136.00 accounted for non-envelope contributions.

# Envelopes In Circulation	189	# Used	85	# Unused	104
Collection One Year Ago = \$	2,410.00				

CRS coll. = \$25.00
 Easter Decorations to date = \$ 679.00, Mandeville Coll. To date = \$ 608.34, Black & Indian coll. = \$25.00

Fifth Sunday of Lent

TRANSFORM US,

O LORD!

Reflections for the
Season of Lent

The Raising of Lazarus

John 11:1-45



W.P. Wilman Ltd., Above: Thinkstock

"If you had been here, my brother would not have died" (Jn 11:21, 32). These are the words of greeting from both Martha and, later, Mary, for their friend, Jesus. What a greeting! It is full of pain. It implies the unasked question of "What kept you for so long, friend?" Yet, it also betrays their utter confidence in Jesus' healing power.

1 When in pain and suffering, do I sense God is near, or far? How do I respond when someone stays away when I need a friend most?

"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?" (Jn 11:25-26).

2 Do I believe this? How does my life — the choices I make, my relationships, what I hold dear — reflect my answer?

Martha, whom Jesus gently chided on a previous visit, now offers the boldest confession about Jesus' identity: "I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world" (Jn 11:27). Martha's words ring with truth and speak to a relationship that was built over time: "I have come to believe." Like Martha's, our own beliefs are formed, supported, and nourished by relationships and within communities.

3 How do we support those who are preparing to enter into the Church at the Easter Vigil? How does my parish community shape my belief in Jesus Christ?

Contrary to common assumption, **the purpose of the funeral Mass is not to celebrate the life of the deceased but to offer worship to God for Christ's victory over death, to comfort the mourners with prayers, and to pray for the soul of the deceased. Relatives or friends who wish to speak of the deceased's character and accomplishments can do so at a prayer service to be held in a home or funeral home or at the graveside following the rite of committal.**

Let's bury the eulogy By Father James Field

A Catholic funeral Mass is no place for a eulogy, says a Catholic pastor, but that doesn't mean we can't speak well of the dead.

I was spending a leisurely minute planning my funeral the other day--not a savory task, but a prudent one since I have pancreatic cancer.

A friend gave me advice, sharing her plans. One car per person; she wants to tie up traffic. Lots of tears. Everyone wears black. No gladiolas, just expensive tropical gingers and flamboyant birds of paradise. Lots of speeches about how endearing and unforgettable she was. Not helpful. Especially the speeches part.

Like all priests, I've squirmed through enough dreadful funeral orations to be very cautious about my own planning. One speaker will be enough. In my case it's a dear friend at whose wedding I presided two decades ago; she has become my guide and my health care proxy on this journey of cancer. She is a parishioner, a member of my extended family now, and she'll be able to speak from the heart, get a laugh or two out of everyone, say something about my faith journey, and sit down again.

It won't be a eulogy, just some words after communion about my faith journey. In four minutes. Of course, the night before, at the vigil or wake, there will be a more raucous opportunity for general sharing on the topic of my life. I expect lots of tears and an unseemly dose of laughter. That may take more than a few minutes to unfold.

The commonplace "eulogy" is not part of our Catholic tradition, and it doesn't belong in a Catholic funeral Mass. *Eulogy* is Greek for "word of praise," and we come to bury Caesar and not to praise the wretch, as Shakespeare says, because the only one we praise in liturgy is Christ.

A local undertaker recently adopted a new obituary style, writing, "A Mass in honor of Bootsie will be celebrated at Holy Martyrs Church tomorrow." No, Bootsie will just have to be patient with us, since we celebrate Mass in honor of Christ.

I don't blame him for his mistake, because lately funerals have taken on the attributes of canonizations. Secular canonizations at that. Nary a word of faith, of a disciple's life, is heard during the "words of remembrance," that brief time after communion often set aside to remember the deceased Christian's witness (rather than a list of accomplishments, or more often, embarrassing moments).

Indeed, you may be surprised that the Catholic Order of Christian Funerals (OCF) makes only one mention of a "eulogy"--and there it outright forbids them, even warning that homilies are to be kept free from the eulogistic style. There are two purposes for the Christian funeral, according to the OCF: "The church through its funeral rites 1) commends the dead to God's merciful love and 2) plead for the forgiveness of their sins." These values conflict with two cultural values in play: 1) to review the biography of the deceased and 2) to achieve "closure."

The first need can be well addressed within the "vigil for the deceased," frequently called "the wake." The second need, for closure, is simply not a Catholic value. We believe that the bonds of affection that unite us in life do not unravel with death; it is merely hidden now in Christ but available to us in prayer and waiting for us in God's future.

Well, that's more like it. In my parish, following the guidelines for the OCF in the Boston archdiocese, one speaker is permitted to offer a "word of remembrance of faith," speaking for three to five minutes. The requirement of submitting a written text is often ignored, and sadly I've been ambushed a few times by wildly inappropriate repartee. "Sorry, Father," giggled one niece, "I guess I shouldn't use language like that in church, tee hee." The congregation at that moment looked like the audience at the opening night of *Springtime for Hitler*. In introducing the young woman, I set people up for "words of remembrance of faith." Everyone knew that she had disrespectfully crossed a line.

Let's bring the stand-up comedy acts to an end in our pulpits, but let's help people make a loving and respectful farewell to a dear one, and so commend him or her to the arms of our good and loving God.

(Starting today - April 6, 2014 - the rule for all funerals at Our Lady of Fatima is only one speaker per funeral (including mine,) no more than four minutes (including tears,) and staying mindful that even with these restrictions we are side stepping the regulations quoted above from the "Order of Christian Funerals."