

10th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 2016

It is a somber duty. Just last Saturday with a call from our fire department the news reached me that one of our rescues and an engine company had responded to a home where a 2-month-old was found not breathing. The news at the hospital got worse as the young parents and grandparents stood helplessly as the medical team worked frantically but without success and could not revive the child. We buried little AUDREY ELIZABETH on Saturday morning in consecrated ground at Saint Ann's Cemetery. There were 65 cars in the funeral procession to help console this young family. It is perhaps the greatest burden of ANY parent and those here with us today who have experienced this cross can testify to it. The news that devastates their lives and sinks their hearts when the turn of life brings the sad occasion for a parent to bury a child. It is the complete reversal of nature, and beyond description, a pain that can last a lifetime.

But, my friends, the powerful Gospel that we just heard [Luke 7:11-17], linked with the first reading from the Old Testament [1 Kings 17:17-24] is the one that always bring hope to those afflicted with that heavy burden. It is the Gospel that I used this morning to console as best I could DEREK AND ALESSANDRA, those young grieving parents. The story is powerful: of a roaming rabbi from Nazareth growing in celebrity and popularity and surrounded by a crowd who spots a funeral procession and a grieving mother walking in silence as her only son is being carried to his early burial. Scripture scholars posit that perhaps Our Blessed Lord saw His own mother in that broken and weeping woman, maybe Mary was in that crowd for He knew that in just a few months she would be the one to feel the pain of holding the lifeless body of her crucified son. And so, without anyone even asking for His help, the Master and the Lord of Life, full of compassion and love, steps forward to send a message to those around Him and to every generation to come: that DEATH will be swallowed up by Him. Its power will be broken forever as He takes the hand of that child and raises him to life. The once saddened mother receives her son back and life is restored.

My friends, what a great faith we have, what a great gospel we proclaim, as we hear these words and revel in the news that they bring. The life that exists in us all is nothing less than the life that comes from God. We confess this life when we publicly recite the Creed, we celebrate this life when we offer the gifts of bread and wine to become the Body and Blood of Christ, and we continue this life when we bring it from IN HERE to our lives OUT THERE.

My friends, let us always be grateful for the Lord who came to us, for like the amazed crowd that day we too, proclaim that in Him and in the faith that is in us, "God has visited His people" and He remains with us forever.

God love you.