

The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, March 29, 2020

PRIESTS WITHOUT PEOPLE

(Except from article by Fr. Paul D. Scalia, The Catholic Thing, March 22)

As of the suspending of the public celebration of the Mass, it feels as though from now on it was always to be Good Friday. Granted, the analogy is not perfect. Our situation is not exactly like Good Friday. The Mass is still being offered (albeit privately), our Eucharistic Lord is still present, and our churches are still open for people to come and pray. Still, although necessary, the suspension of public Mass does create a sorrow not unlike Good Friday's. It is like being exiled from a loved one: you know where He is, but you cannot be with Him.

Here is another painful exile: that of the priest from his people. The faithful throughout the world suffer the pain of life without the Mass. Priests suffer the pain of life without their people. Those men have given their lives for Christ's flock. Now they struggle to understand their lives apart from that flock. Tend the flock of God in your midst, Saint Peter exhorts the Church's pastors. (1Pt 5:2) But what to do when the flock is no longer in your midst. . .and not allowed to be?

(Priests) lives don't make sense without a people to serve or a flock to tend. When asked what he thought about the laity, Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman famously observed that "the Church would look foolish without them." As it turns out, it is (the) priests who look most foolish in that scenario.

The suspension of public Mass, like any cross we endure, can and should become an occasion for spiritual growth. We need to draw what good we can from this suffering.

Ours is an unexpected advent in the midst of Lent. We are waiting – and thus preparing – for when the priest of Christ can again be with his people.

Keeping you in my prayers,

Father John Carlos

来自 **Robert Barron** 主教在降临期第五主日的反思：

朋友们，今天拉匝禄从死者中复活的福音带给我们一个非常明确的信息。

阅读这篇福音时，我们领悟到我们每个人都在不同程度上，或多或少在灵修上死亡了。也许你就像拉匝禄那样在坟墓中待了四天了，也许你自暴自弃，觉得没有希望。但我不在乎你跌落得有多深，我也不在乎你是哪种“死”法，但基督的声音可以把你唤回来，重新回到你的生命中，把你从坟墓

中拽出来。

玛尔大，那个死去的拉匝禄的姐姐，对祂说：**【主，已经臭了，他已死四天了。】**

也许你沉溺于酗酒吸毒中不能自拔，也许你做了让你自己羞愧不能启齿的事，也许你和你最爱的人关系搞得一团糟，也许你吹毛求疵讨人厌一流，也许你觉得你是个失败者，也许你对死怕得要命，这些我都不在乎。但你要聆听这个声音：

【解开他，让他行走罢。】