

Third Sunday of Lent – “Woman, behold your son; son, behold your mother.”

Partners In Charity “In-Pew” Appeal

In the Garden of Eden, when the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come upon the man, God took one of the man’s ribs and formed it into a female. When the Lord God brought her to the man, Adam exclaimed that this, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.

God planted His people in Paradise and gave them everything their hearts could ever want, save the knowledge of good and evil. The woman was tempted to be God, and in her pride, she ate the fruit of arrogance and shared it with her man. Innocence was ruined, the Garden was deserted, and sin and death began its reign.

And now, from the cross, Jesus sees His Mother and the unnamed disciple whom He loves. He speaks to the one who did not presume to be God but rather said “Yes” to bring God into the world. He calls her not “Mother”; He calls her “Woman” for she is the new Eve and from her shall come a new Creation, a human family, the Church, bound together in the blood of her Son, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor freeman, woman or man. Jesus, in this third word from the cross, looks upon us, His beloved disciples, and gives us His Mother to be ours, gives us one another to be family, to be Church. When Adam and Eve’s eldest son killed his brother, Cain asked God if God expected

him to be his brother's keeper. From the cross, the Son of God resoundingly answers to Cain, and to all of humanity "Yes".

Today, we the Church of the Diocese of Worcester, are, once again, invited to put our Faith in Action, to Love our brothers and sisters, most of whom we will never meet, but, for whom, we are called by Christ from the cross, to be responsible for, to care for, to love through our charity for these, our brothers and sisters.

I am only one person. I cannot possibly meet all the needs of my brothers and sisters, let alone know many of them or their situations. But, I can join with other brothers and sisters throughout the Diocese of Worcester in putting my Faith In Action, putting my money where I claim my heart is, to pool our resources to form a wave of charity that can make a difference.

Let me walk us now through the process that makes this happen while we sit in this church before the cross that speaks of love.

The "In-Pew" Process

As we finish now, and our representatives from the Partners In Charity outreach come to collect our pledge envelopes, may I thank you for what you have done here this day. As God said at the dawn of Creation, He looked upon this and saw that it was very good.

I pray the intercession of St. Mother Teresa that our appeal this year will yield an abundant harvest for Christ in our brothers and sisters in need and I leave you once again with her words that Greg left us with last week ...