




DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

ROOTED IN CHRIST

LENT 2022



THIRSTING *Thursday*



THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAINS IS THE GOD OF THE VALLEYS



Graves into Gardens

I grew up in the upper desert of Southern California, where it often didn't rain for six months at a time. In the heat of the summer, and then through the fall and winter, it was hard to imagine that anything would ever come back to life. But the rains would finally come, and even the most desolate hillsides would burst forth with lavish green grasses and foliage. What once looked like the dusty tumbleweeds from a vintage western movie came to life in technicolor wonder, almost overnight!

We have those same seasons in our lives. There are good times, and then there are times when it's a challenge to get out of bed in the morning, to face another day, to go about even the most mundane tasks. We've all

experienced those days, haven't we?

The Paschal Mystery that we celebrate in the Eucharist reminds us that after the dying, comes the rising.

In her wisdom, the Church invites us to experience the rhythms of life in the liturgical seasons. The season of Lent allows us to acknowledge the ways we feel "life" going out of us, like the desert grass thirsting for rain. Over the course of 40 days, we intentionally seek ways to "die" to ourselves, to identify with our spiritual poverty. In doing so, we come face to face with temptation, just as Jesus did, to gravitate toward the things we think will bring us relief. You see, the devil tempts us with good things, but he can only offer us poor substitutes for the *best* thing!

The Paschal Mystery that we celebrate in the Eucharist reminds us that after the dying, comes the rising. God can bring dry bones to life. God can breathe life into souls that are dead from sin. God can turn graves into gardens. God Himself is the answer to all our longings.

I pray that your Lenten journey prepares you to celebrate the "Alleluia" of Easter with a renewed appreciation for the work Jesus did through the Cross. He died that we might live. Death no longer has the final word! Each of our small "dyings" is a participation in the redemptive work of our Savior. Nothing is lost or wasted in God's economy. Even our suffering matters.

"Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)



Mary Hallman is the Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life. A native of Southern California, she has worked in both parish and diocesan ministry, and has learned from some of the best Catholic and Protestant leaders throughout the country. In her free time, Mary enjoys movies, a good cup of coffee, and the company of family and friends...and she is always looking to meet new people! [Send her a message](#) to say "hello."

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