

"Jesus wept."

As a child in church school I learned that
that was the shortest verse in the entire Bible.
It captured my imagination.

Well, I've been out of church school for a while now
and biblical translations have changed over the years.
So the version of this sentence we heard today is a bit different
than what I learned as a child,
but the meaning is the same:
Jesus wept at the death of his friend Lazarus.

But not only that.
Jesus began to weep when he saw the sisters Martha and Mary,
and their friends, mourn Lazarus.

Jesus wept
out of his *own* sorrow, yes,
but also out of empathy with the sorrow of others.

And that's what we're about today.
Honoring those we mourn
by entrusting their names to be said aloud
for one another.

So in The Litany of the Saints,
let's say their names boldly right out-loud.
I'll say a few of your saints and you say some of mine;
you name a few of his saints and you name some of hers.
As the bell tolls,
walk up from your pews as you would for communion.
Come toward the light --
the Paschal Candle first lit on Easter Eve --
the celebration of the life, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus,

which our loved ones now share in all its fullness.

Then pick a few leaves from the basket
and let us hear the names of our loved ones, *our saints*,
said aloud once more.

In the end, it doesn't much matter if the name is said
at this service or the other,
or even if it's perfectly pronounced.
God knows exactly who it is.

As Jesus knows exactly what it is to remember those we love,
and have compassion on us
who miss them still.

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