

**Have you ever tried to stop weeds from growing? People use everything. If we just put this tarp down, or maybe rocks over the dirt or maybe cement over the ground, yeah, that will do it. No more weeds! And yet, no matter what, you see the weeds stretching to the side of the tarp or climbing up through the rocks and they will even find or make cracks in the cement and poke through in victory. You can see plants and even trees growing in the strangest places. Sometimes I wonder, how does that thing get enough water? If you drive up Hwy 50 you see trees growing out of a rock - and there the tree lives. It is quite a testament to God's handiwork. You cannot stop life. Sometimes we seem to try but life will burst through in the end. No matter how dark or cold or snowy the winter, the plants come to life anew.**

**The guards were set at Jesus' tomb to keep death in its place. The life that once filled the body of Jesus was gone and a bunch of people wanted it to stay gone. A huge rock with the governor's seal at the entrance was supposed to secure that. But you cannot stop life! The earth quaked, the angel moved the rock, the guards of death became like dead men themselves and the angel sits upon the rock as a throne. Because you cannot stop life!**

**Today marks the 10th anniversary of the Virginia Tech shooting, one of the worst school shootings in our nation's history. Yesterday was the 4th anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombings. But you cannot stop life. Certainly people remember and are broken, changed by such horrific events, it looks like death wins - but like those plants and trees that find a way to grow, life pokes through. (Professors story about a student whose sister was shot - hugs - "Is it time for me to teach now? Yes.) Teaching and learning goes on at Virginia Tech and the marathon will be run again this year in Boston and the people celebrated "One Boston Day" yesterday to remind themselves and the world that you can't stop life.**

***"Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"***  
**St. Paul writes. Through that baptism we are united with him in resurrection too - but only if we die to ourselves - not to stop life, but to bring it anew. Hopefully through the observance of Lent new seeds have been planted in us, in our Church and in our world, which will bring forth new life. New light and life is what Christians are to bring into the darkness and death we so often**

**see. Over and over we hear in our Scriptures, "Do not be afraid!" Why? As Matthew's gospel concludes, because "*I am with you always, until the end of the age.*" That is the Christ we embrace today - the One with us in our joys and in our sorrows, in life and through death and into life forever.**

**We call upon that new life for our catechumens, now newly baptized, we renew it in the life of all of us who have been baptized. Let us go to the new waters of the font and refresh our baptismal promises.**