



## HE WILL RISE AGAIN



*“The Almighty has done great things for me”!* (Saint Luke 1:49) Two thousand years ago those words surfaced from the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Today, they surface from the grateful heart of Father Arcoleo.

Amongst the great things the Almighty has done for me is the call I heard issue forth from the lips of Jesus: “Follow Me”; a call that after many years of *looking for love in all the wrong places, looking for love in too many faces*, led me to the Priesthood where I have in fact found true Love: in many faces and in many places. I found it in the Priests and parishioners of Saint Patrick/Smithtown where I spent my first five years (1998 – 2003) after Ordination. I found it in the Priests and parishioners of Saint Ignatius Loyola/Hicksville where I spent my second five years in the Priesthood. And I am finding it *day by day* in my first assignment as a Pastor at Our Holy Redeemer/Freeport where on Easter Monday 2016, I received the news that David Arcoleo, the son of Joan and Frank, the father of Devin, Trevor, and Lauren, and the brother of Debbie, Diane, and yours truly, had died suddenly at “Camp David”/his home in Bayville, New York.

The news of David’s death quickly made its way around the world, and just as quickly came expressions of condolences that would provide his family and friends with everything we needed to walk by Faith through this challenging time. Bishop Murphy heard the news while on a plane at JFK preparing to take-off for a ten day Priesthood Retreat in Rome and Assisi, and promised that he and the Priests of the Diocese accompanying him would offer Mass for the repose of David’s soul on the following day. Similar assurances quickly arrived as well from Bishop Brennan and Monsignor James McNamara; both of whom were on board with Bishop Murphy. These condolences set the stage for the hundreds more that would follow both online and offline (“And what about that line at Hungerford and Clark?”) from other places outside of the United States such as China and London, as well as from almost every state in the nation, and town/city/village on Long Island including but certainly not limited to Amityville, Dix Hills, Bayville, Bohemia, Garden City, Smithtown, Hicksville, and of course the Village of Freeport!

Our Holy Redeemer in Freeport has been my home for nearly eight years, and during David’s Wake and Funeral Mass, parishioners and non-parishioners alike saw firsthand why “coming home is what it’s all about” and what makes our church “absolutely beautiful”: *it is the Lord!* The Lord Who at the Wake reached out and embraced David’s parents, children, family, and friends with the Love that every one of us was looking for; the Love that *every one of us is looking for* (cf. Saint Mark 1:37)! *It is the Lord* Who with the help of Priests, Deacons, Religious, Altar Servers, Cantor, Musician, Ushers, and the gathered assembly offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and fed us with the Love that helped *take the sting out of death and rob it of its victory* (cf. I Corinthians xv:55). And while three days after laying his body to rest some of us might have been looking for a repeat of what happened two thousand years ago, three days after Someone else’s body was laid to rest, we knew that wasn’t going to happen: at least not yet.

The day will come (our Faith assures us), when David will rise again, and the incredible amount of support that we received/are receiving from Our Holy Redeemer in Freeport and countless others, allows us to believe that David will rise again without having to see it! Thank you! Yes, *the Almighty has done great things for me:* right here in Freeport!