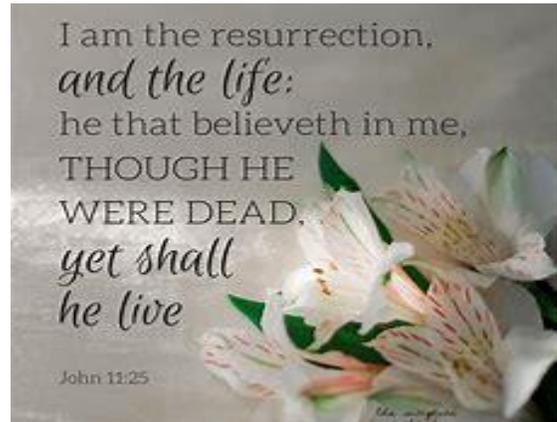


# Fifth Sunday of Lent

Gospel for March 29, 2020 (Lectionary: 34)

## OPENING PRAYER (COLLECT)

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen*



*At this time, add your personal prayers and intentions. Please also pray for the Pope, priests, all religious, and all people impacted by the Coronavirus*

## † INTRODUCE THE THEME

TODAY'S THEME: From Death to Eternal Life

*Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, and even his most faithful followers are amazed. Jesus promises that those who follow him and believe will receive even something better than this.*

## † OPENING REFLECTION QUESTION:

Here are some comments to ponder as you hear the Word:

- The reading invites us to reflect on what it means to call Jesus, “The Resurrection and the Life” and
- To reflect on Baptism as a way of dying and rising with Jesus in Baptism [the catechumens normally celebrate their Baptism at the Triduum]:
  - we die to sin’s power over us, and rise as the children of God
  - we join ourselves with Christ, who conquered death, so that we who believe in him will have eternal life
- With Martha and Mary, we are called to profess our belief that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life.

## † THE READING (Lectio)

Verse Before the Gospel [JN 1:25A, 26](#)

*I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die.*

## [A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN \(JN 11:1-45\)](#)

*(Include the bracketed text for the long form; or skip for the short form)*

*[Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So] the sisters (of Lazarus) sent word to him saying, "Master, the one you love is ill." When Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."*

*[The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him."]*

*When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.*

*[Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.]*

*When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."*

*[When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping,] he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?" So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this, He cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie*

*him and let him go.” Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.*

### † REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- There is irony in that on the same day Lazarus received new life and rose from the dead, the Sanhedrin decided that Jesus must die and plan to kill him.
- Events in the raising of Lazarus are similar to events at the wedding at Cana
  - Martha and Mary send a message to Jesus that has a similar tone to what Mary said to Jesus
    - Martha and Mary: So the sisters sent word to him, saying: “Master, the one you love is ill.” John 11:3
    - Mary to Jesus: When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” John 2:3
  - Jesus exhibits a similar reaction at each event:
    - It appears that Jesus rejects the request
    - To Martha and Mary’s request: So when [Jesus] heard that [Lazarus] was ill, [Jesus] remained for two days in the place where he was. John 11:6
    - To Mary’s request: “Woman, how does your concern affect me?...” John 2:4
  - Both events end with a miracle, a manifestation of God’s glory through Jesus
- Several elements of this reading foreshadow Jesus’ resurrection
- In raising Lazarus, Jesus shows his power over death
  - This will give hope to those who believe after Jesus dies on the cross
- Jesus told people to have the stone rolled away from the tomb; in the same way, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and the other disciples will find the stone rolled away from Jesus’ tom
  - Contrast between the two: when Lazarus exits the tomb, he is still wearing the burial clothes; this is a reminder that he will still die
  - when Jesus exits the tomb, his burial clothes are neatly folded and left in the tomb; this is a reminder that Jesus will not die (John 20:5-7)

### † THE SECOND TIME THROUGH (Meditatio)

**Re-read the passage again, slowly with a deeper understanding or watch an optional video reenactment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfvzTm1mOCQ>**

Take a moment to reflect on what you just heard.

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What makes you excited about the text?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged or even threatened you?

*For further consideration, ponder some of the following:*

- Martha expresses profound sorrow at the death of Lazarus, but it is tinged with a touch of blaming Jesus: “Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died.”

- Consider: Where do I resent the losses in my life and somehow blame God for them rather than seeing them as places where God's glory will be revealed?
- Even when Jesus tells Martha, "I am the one who raises the dead to life!" she finds it hard to believe he means now, in the case of her dead brother. She thinks Jesus is referring to the resurrection at the end of time.
  - Where do I doubt that Jesus can bring life?
  - Where do I doubt that Jesus can help me in my situations?
- Jesus stands before the tomb weeping. He places no barriers to his feelings about death.
  - Could he be staring at and facing the tomb of his own death?
  - Can I stand before and face the tombs in my daily life?
- Jesus shouts the liberating words of life, "Lazarus come forth!"
  - How is Jesus shouting those words to me today?
- Explain Martha's role in the raising of her brother Lazarus from the dead? Why is it important?
- Martha and Mary exemplify two common reactions in the face of the death of a loved one? Which do you feel closer to? Why?
- Place yourself at the tomb of Lazarus as Jesus, cries out "Lazarus come forth!"
  - What is going through your mind? Describe the scene.
  - What is the reaction of the onlookers, what do you see? How does it affect you?

† **THIRD READING: Prayer (Oratorio) – Note: As passage is long, may combine with Fourth Reading.**

**Reread the scripture passage**

- Are there any comparable situations today to which this text might apply?
- What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?

† **FOURTH READING: Contemplation (Contemplatio) – may be combined with third if time is short**

- What have you considered about today's reading that you might want to bring with you in the following week?
- How can we make our lives a gift for others in charity?

† **CLOSING PRAYER (Communion Antiphon JN 11:26)**

Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die forever, says the Lord.

(Responsorial Psalm PS 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8)

**ALL: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

LORD, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

To my voice in supplication.

**ALL: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,  
LORD, who can stand?  
But with you is forgiveness,  
That you may be revered.

ALL: **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

I trust in the LORD;  
My soul trusts in his word.  
More than sentinels wait for the dawn,  
Let Israel wait for the LORD.

ALL: **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

For with the LORD is kindness  
And with him is plenteous redemption;  
And he will redeem Israel  
From all their iniquities.

ALL: **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**