

# Lent 5

Wednesday, March 25

Looking toward Sunday, March 29

## Scripture: John 11: 1-44

<sup>1</sup>Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup>But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup>Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup>after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

<sup>7</sup>Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup>The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup>But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." <sup>11</sup>After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." <sup>12</sup>The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." <sup>13</sup>Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup>For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup>Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

<sup>17</sup>When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup>Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, <sup>19</sup>and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. <sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." <sup>23</sup>Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." <sup>24</sup>Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." <sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, <sup>26</sup>and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup>She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

<sup>28</sup>When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." <sup>29</sup>And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup>The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. <sup>32</sup>When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup>He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup>Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup>So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

<sup>38</sup>Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord,

already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.”<sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”<sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

## Questions:

1. What word/phrase stands out to you in this passage?
  - a. How does that word/phrase connect with your Lenten journey?
  - b. How does that word/phrase connect with your life?
2. Mary and Martha are on the verge of trusting/believing that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Yet, they are keenly aware that their brother is dead, and, understandably, have doubts.
  - a. What challenges/doubts do you face in trusting/believing that Jesus is the resurrection and the life?
3. When Jesus responds to Martha, he offers her an answer in response to her grief. In contrast, when Jesus answers Mary, he offers her no words and weeps with her in compassion.
  - a. What answers do you long for?
  - b. How might Jesus be offering you comfort?
  - c. Which is more “satisfying” to you: answers or comfort?
4. Put yourself in the position of Lazarus. You are bound. What are rags might you need to pull off to experience the life that Jesus is calling you to?
5. In your life how have you been reborn? Can you give some examples of times when the Spirit has breathed new life into your spirit for the first time or resuscitated your spirit?
6. What in this passage reflects your journey with Jesus? What in this passage reflects specifically your *Lenten* journey this year?

## My prayer to Jesus this week is...

*Return to the word/phrase that stood out to you as you began engaging with the text. Turn that word/phrase into your own prayer to Jesus.*

## Prayer of the Week

Lord Jesus, call us forth from the tomb of our timidity, and give us the courage to trust you as the source of all life. We hear your assurances, offering us life, and want to believe. Help our unbelief. Revive our spirits. Revive our belief. Revive our devotion to you until, once again, our hearts beat in sync with yours. Unbind us, so that we might experience your compassion for our frailties; and allow us to hear your Word of Life in the depth of our souls. In Jesus’ name, who has come to save and redeem us, we pray. Amen.