

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

Fifth Sunday of Lent — March 29, 2020

First Reading — Ezekiel 37:12-14

¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, says the LORD."

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

R. (7) **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.

R. **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.

R. **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.

R. **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.

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

Second Reading — Romans 8:8-11

...⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Gospel Reading — John 11:1-45

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it." ⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶So when he heard that he was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." ⁸The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰But if any one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." ¹¹Thus he spoke, and then he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awake him

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out of sleep.”¹²The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”¹³Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead;¹⁵and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”¹⁶Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”¹⁷Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off,¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary sat in the house.²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.²²And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.”²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁴Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,²⁶and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”²⁷She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.”²⁸When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying quietly, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”²⁹And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.³¹When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.³²Then Mary, when she came where Jesus was and saw him, fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled;³⁴and he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”³⁵Jesus wept.³⁶So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”³⁷But some of

them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”³⁸ Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb; it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.³⁹ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.”⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.⁴² I knew that thou hearest me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me.”⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.”⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”⁴⁵ Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him; ...

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading — Ezekiel 37:12-14

1. Which of these promises are most meaningful to you? Why?

Second Reading — Romans 8:8-11

2. What does it mean to be “in the flesh” and “in the Spirit”?

Gospel Reading — John 11:1-45

3. With which of the people in this incident do you most identify?
4. How have you experienced comfort in the loss of a loved one?
5. How would you answer Jesus’ question in verse 26?
6. What is the stone that needs to be rolled away so that you can experience new life?
7. How can we help roll away the stone for others?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another’s openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.