

FOR THE WEEKEND OF MAR. 21-22, 2026a

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Gospel Reading

Jn 11:1-45

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 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 Messiah, 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.

Intercession

May we have the strength to believe in God’s promises to us, even when we are most vulnerable. And, renewed in this faith, may we be a source of strength to others through support of the Catholic Ministry Appeal.

Copy for Bulletin Announcement

Time and time again, we see examples of Jesus working miracles that demonstrate his identity as the long-awaited Messiah. This powerful passage cements Jesus’ divinity. Yet, at the same time, it confirms that Christ is also human. He loves Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. Jesus weeps for

the loss of his friend and is deeply touched by the sorrow Mary and Martha feel at the death of their brother. He experiences these very human emotions because he is *fully* human.

But he is also fully divine. He brings Lazarus back, from the death to life, from the darkness of the sealed tomb to the bright light of his family home and sisterly love. Christ's deep love for this family reflects God's love for us. It is personal. God is always present and wants to be part of our lives.

Lazarus' rising from the dead foreshadows Christ's resurrection. Death has no power; Jesus will be with us always. When he is born, he is called "Emmanuel," or "God is with us." When he visits the apostles the last time before ascending into heaven, he reminds them that he will be with them always, "even to the end of time" (Matthew 28:20). In times of darkness, we can be emissaries of this very real, very personal, love that Our Lord has for us. By making a gift to the Catholic Ministry Appeal, we can make his presence known to those who need it most.

Copy for Pulpit Announcement

Trust and faith seem like absolutes, but many times they are not. The adage "trust but verify" indicates that we like to hedge bets. We say we trust others, but we're going to check up on them just to be sure! Like poor doubting Thomas, who has to see the risen Lord, even place his fingers in Jesus' wounds, before he accepts that Jesus had triumphed over death.

How very different these examples of trust are from the faith Martha exhibits. When Jesus first arrives, Martha calls him "Lord," indicating that she believes he is the Promised One. She then states that her brother would still be alive if Jesus had come earlier. She trusts in his healing powers. Finally, when Jesus asks her if she believes that he is "the resurrection and the life," she responds, "I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." She believes, despite the deep sorrow she feels at her brother's passing, that all will be well. Jesus is now with them.

This Lent, we can help dispel the darkness so many people, like Martha and Mary, feel. Through a faith that calls us to action, we can bring the life and light of Christ to others by supporting the programs and initiatives of the Catholic Ministry Appeal. Our gifts can fortify their faith.

Social Media Post/Content

Photo: Hands clasped in prayer

Header: "'Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me.'" – John 11:41

Copy: Our God is a loving, present God!



The Lord hears the cry of the poor (Psalm 34) through the Catholic Ministry Appeal. Please consider supporting this important campaign.