

5th Sunday of Lent (Year A)

John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

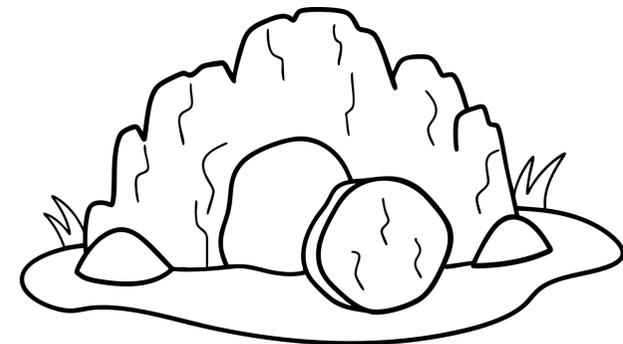
'I am the resurrection and the life.'

At that time: The sisters of Lazarus sent to Jesus, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. 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 from God, God will give you.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.' Jesus was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be a smell, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said,

'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.

Reflection

In today's Gospel we hear the story of Jesus bringing his friend Lazarus back to life. It's also a very human moment, because we are told that Jesus wept. Even though he knew what he was going to do, he still shared in the sadness of Martha and Mary. This reminds us that Jesus understands our pain and is with us when we are grieving or struggling. When Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb, we see both his humanity and his power as the Son of God who brings life. For us as Vincentians, inspired by St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam, this Gospel reminds us that believing in Jesus isn't just about what we say we believe, but about how we care for others, especially those who are hurting or feeling alone, just as Jesus showed compassion to those around him. As we move closer to Holy Week and Easter, Jesus' words, "I am the resurrection and the life," remind us that even in the darkest moments, God can bring hope and new life.



Materials needed

- Fresh Rosemary

Activity

Each person is to be given a sprig of rosemary. Rosemary can be used to help with memory, each person is to rub the rosemary between their fingers and then to smell the scent. When doing so, think of the many memories of those you love, family and friends, as well as those who are no longer alive. Thank God for these people and memories that you have.

Call to Action

Share this activity with someone else this week. Give them a sprig of rosemary and invite them to reflect on the memories they hold of the people they love - family and friends, as well as those who have died. You might use this activity during a visit to a care home, or while spending time with someone who may be feeling lonely, as a gentle way to begin a conversation and share memories together.

