

5th Sunday Lent 2026

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

The sisters, Mary and Martha, sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will not end in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said - I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord', she said I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, he could not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?'

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: 'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me. But I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.' Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

Reflection on the Gospel

The story reveals a family in turmoil - a loved one has died. Mary withdraws in grief. Martha however, needs to talk. When grief enters our lives, we react differently. Jesus makes no judgement here as to which is the best way - he allows Mary her solitude and listens and talks with Martha. In this story Lazarus represents each one of us - Lazarus means 'God helps'. When we are *in need as now*, we must first call on Jesus - through prayer tell him of our worry and isolation Jesus will respond - we must believe that he *cares* - when he responds he will do what each person needs. Jesus *can do the seemingly impossible!*



Prayer:

I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever lives and believes in me will never die.