

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
March 29, 2020



SENTENCE

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. *John 11.25, 26*

COLLECT

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us with the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ, and serve you in holiness and righteousness all our days, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

READINGS

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

REFLECTIONS

Let's begin with a question.

Is this raising of Lazarus an historical report, i.e.. Is this the report of an event as it occurred?

There is nothing in the synoptic gospels (Mark, Matthew, and Luke – the earliest gospels) that comes even close to this event in John's gospel. There are healings, even raising the dead but nothing concerning raising to life of someone dead and buried for 4 days (it simply means Really! Really! Unmistakably dead). And John is writing 30-40 years after Jesus death, and approximately 50 years after the 1st gospel – so this is not something he has found written by someone else. This is John's proclamation of who Jesus is for him.

For John, Jesus is life even in the midst of what appears to be death.

It's interesting to me that in this time of Covid 19, social distancing, self- isolating, guaranteeing, the gospel asks us to think about what really constitutes life.

In 1st century Galilee, the person who determined the basic realities\boundaries that determined "life" was the head of the household (almost always a male). Without such a person (male) the household was almost certainly doomed. Without Lazarus, Martha and Mary were almost certainly doomed to an existence that would hardly be called 'life' - perhaps subsistence existence at best.

The Gospel writer is telling us that **Jesus is life**. That was certainly true for Martha and Mary. Without Jesus (and so Lazarus) there was certainly no real hope of life for Martha and Mary. Is that true for you?

You know from my short bio last week, that Jesus has been the central focus of my life. Not in some kind of 'spooky' ooohh way but the one I look to, talk to, listen to, try (in my stumbling/fumbling kind of way) to follow. Has Covid 19 challenged my way of life? I'd have to be living under a rock to say no. With the loss of 30% of my income? O yea! Do I have questions? Like, "How are we going to do this/get through this?" Absolutely! But one of the things I'm coming to learn on this journey is patience and trust. Not everything will happen as quickly and as simply I would like. So while I still put my trust in Jesus, I also need to trust the people and the resources I have been blessed with (the people and the resources that 'incarnate' or make real and visible the presence or help Jesus offers me. One of those 'blessings' (to use more traditional language) is my financial adviser.

So, **we'll** get through this: me, Jesus, and every person and circumstance he's placed by my side to incarnate his presence and his help.

So, I leave you with 2 questions (and one is not more important than the other) who incarnates (makes visible) Jesus' presence for you? And for whom are you that incarnation?

WE'LL get through this!

Written by The Rev'd. Jack Cox.

Please feel free to offer comments or contact me at:

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please pray for Our Bishop Dr. Todd Townshend, Anne our Metropolitan, Linda, our Primate, Mark, National Indigenous Archbishop and Marinez, Bishop of Amazonia. Rev. Bill Graham (interim) and the people of **Trinity, Waterford**. and all lay and clergy leaders.

We ask your prayers for parishioners and friends in need of God's healing touch upon their lives: Betty F., Don G., Franz and Elaine Z., Andrea P., Steven K., Rebecca M., Trista P., Elizabeth C-K., Bill Mc., Dwayne M, and Andrea B., Susan A., Olivia H., Karen M. Jerry M., Diane H., Delores B., Mark A and Hazel A. and baby Maeve A. and anyone known to you.

We ask your prayers at this time for the soul of Michael Smith, a Pt Dover Fisherman who was lost on the Lake this week. Please sustain his wife Sherry, and their whole family and community in this time of grief.

Remember our shut-ins at home, hospital and in local nursing homes: June, Shirley, Iris, Everett, Julie, David, John, Anna, and Ron

Prayer for hospital staff and researchers:

Gracious God give skill sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.

Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Search us O God and know our hearts today
Try us and know our anxious thoughts,
see if there are any hurtful ways in us
and lead us in your loving and life-giving Way

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God knows our secret fears, ignorance & selfish ways.
God forgives, forgive yourself, forgive others Amen

DOXOLOGY

Glory to God whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.
Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.
Amen

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer for us as from the Church of England:

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can
separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Friday night card games will not take place until further notice.

Please click on the link to watch AD Rick's video for this week

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XL0nIGpolZ4>

At this extraordinary time if you are experiencing difficulties with the necessities of life please contact Archdeacon Rick or Anne at the addresses and telephones below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Archdeacon Rick Jones can be contacted by email rickplus@gmail.com or
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Please visit our website parishoflongpointbay.com and Facebook page