**Five Minute Jesus**

**Using the Gospel for Prayer** – **Fifth Sunday in Lent** - March 29, 2020

*It’s simple. 1. Read the Gospel for the following Sunday slowly, reflecting on the story it tells. 2. Reflect on the questions assigned for each day. 3. Make some resolution about how what you read can be lived that day. 4. Then thank God for speaking to you through this reflection.*

**The Gospel according to John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45\***

The sisters of Lazarus sent word to Jesus, 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.”

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 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, “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 Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.” 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.

**Sunday**

Was there something in this reading that spoke to me? Comforted me? Challenged me? What was it? Why did it have this effect on me?

**Monday**

This story deals with the death of a loved one. Mary and Martha loved their brother Lazarus. Jesus loved him too. Have I ever experienced the death of a loved one? What did I do to hold on to the one I loved and keep them from dying? How would I have felt hearing Jesus’ response to Martha and Mary’s plea to come and heal their brother?

**Tuesday**

Jesus sees glory in Lazarus’ illness and death and tells his disciples and Martha and Mary as much. Have I ever seen God’s hand at work in my suffering or illness? Have I seen God’s presence even in death? If so, how? And how did that transform the experience for me?

**Wednesday**

In Martha and Mary’s world, a woman without a husband, father or some man to protect her, was as good as dead. Lazarus’ death meant that for all intents and purposes, Martha’s and Mary’s lives were over as well. Jesus was Lazarus’ friend but Lazarus is dead four days by the time Jesus arrives. He was not there to comfort them, he was not there to heal him. Why did Jesus wait? Have I ever felt abandoned by God? How did God finally show up? How did I greet God then?

**Thursday**

 It is said that the shortest verse in the entire Bible is, “Jesus wept”. Why did Jesus weep? What do his tears tell me about who he is, and how he feels about us all? Would he weep for me as his friend? If so, why? If not, why not?

**Friday**

At the end of the gospel, Jesus raises his friend from the dead. Lazarus exits the tomb, still bound in his burial shroud, and Jesus commands “Untie him and let him go”. Lazarus is not merely alive, he is freed. With this the point of the story becomes clear: Jesus, whom we have journeyed with all through Lent, is not merely a prophet or a healer, but is the one with power even over life and death. John wants us to know that even in the face of death, Jesus is in control. Have I ever had to face death; the death of a loved one, or even my own? How did my faith help me? From what do I need to be “untied” so that I can be free to live?