



The Word
The Fifth Sunday of Lent
Week of March 26

Call to Prayer and Sharing

- ✦ *Leader invites all into a few moments of silent reflection to remember that we are in the presence of God. (reflective pause)*

- ✦ *Then: "In the name of the Father and of the Son . . ."*

The Word of God

- ✦ *Leader reads part or all of one of the scripture texts from the previous Sunday.*

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.

Faith Sharing

- ✦ *Leader reminds everyone of the Question of the Week which relates to the particular group gathered*

Children: How do your actions show that you put your faith and trust in Jesus?

Youth: Lazarus received a second chance at life through Jesus. How have you experienced second chances in your own life?

Adults: The death from which we are called is healing from those things which bind us and hold us back: memories, fears, rejection, or other such things. What binds you? What keeps you from fully being your own most true self in Christ?

We offer this form of contemplative sharing for pondering Scripture while considering the question, and for the faith sharing which follows.

- Listen/ Read (Lectio): Ponder God's word and listen for what touches your heart.
- Meditate (Meditatio): Notice what you notice. Allow God's word to resonate in you.
- Speak/Share (Oratio): Prayerfully share with the group your thoughts and feelings.
- Rest in God's presence (Contemplatio): Notice God's presence and be still, surrounded by God's love.
- Choose to act (Actio): Trusting in God's nearness, commit to action rooted in love.

Time is provided for sharing responses to the question. Silence between responses is to be expected. Allow about 15 minutes for faith sharing. For larger groups, leader invites members to divide into groups of three or four for faith sharing.

- ✦ *When the sharing comes to an end, the leader invites everyone to take a moment to silently and reverently hold what has been shared together.*
- ✦ *Continue with the meeting, turning to the agenda.*

Concluding the meeting

At the end of the meeting, the leader closes with the following prayer:

Good and Gracious God,
your love for us surpasses all understanding.
As we leave here today,
be with us in all our comings and goings,
and in all that we say and do.
We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus who is our Light.
Amen.