

TRINITY NEWS

Lent V

Lazarus Rising as a Metaphor of Hope.

Kevin Costner, as **The Postman** in the 1997 movie of that name, is encouraged by the appreciation of a young person: “You gave out hope like candy from your pocket.” What a wonderful thing to say about someone!

Jesus wept with the mourners at the tomb of Lazarus. Some of the Jews standing by said, “See how much he loved him.” Sincere emotion is always convincing. It cannot be feigned. Pretence is all too obvious.

A gaping hole excavated by grief cannot be filled with syrup.

Belief in resurrection should not be used to gloss over heart-wrenching loss.

As Abraham Heschel said, “We want God to come to us. We need to go to God.”

The best way to reach for the stars is to fall into the depths of our own soul. When we explore where we have landed, we are raised up beyond our expectations.

We are caught up in the circle of life, and we cannot break the circle. There is frustration in that, and uncertainty, even fear, but the circle has no beginning or end. We can put a mark on it somewhere to say where we began on the circle, but the ‘end’ is endless.

The resuscitation of Lazarus prefigures the resurrection of Christ. Words from this passage adorn the main entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Lazarus resumes his normal life, perhaps from an abnormal perspective. Resurrection is a total transformation without any further historical life. The appearances of Christ after his resurrection were of both an earthly and heavenly nature. They were not meant to last, but trans-historical memoirs from heaven that appeared in the history of others.

Mary and Martha, the two sisters of Lazarus, and close friends of Jesus, make up a fascinating trio. No other family outside Mary and Joseph get so close to Jesus in Israel. Jesus declared in his ministry that anyone who heard his word and put it into practice was part of his family, like a blood relative. But this family gets singled out in the biblical narrative.

Martha takes the initiative in John's gospel to go looking for Jesus. Both sisters tell Jesus that their brother would not have died if he had been there. After all, he had waited for two days after he heard that Lazarus was ill before he set out for Bethany. Jesus must have felt that criticism, but his own timing was in tune to what God was going to do in the life of Lazarus. The raising of Lazarus would be for the glory of God.

People go to the heroic lengths at times to be there when their loved ones are dying, and they're often distraught if they are not there at the precise moment. But the timing of a life is not in their hands. According to our faith, that timing is in the hands of God. Noble Intentions are wonderful, but we cannot always fulfil them, even with our most diligent efforts.

Lazarus is a metaphor of a great hope that would find its fulfilment in the resurrection of Christ. Try handing out hope this week like candy in your pocket handed to a child.

Bishop Arthur Jones

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Isaiah 45:21-25; Psalm 22; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 27:1-54

THIS WEEK:

April 12, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am
- Lenten Study, 7:15pm (#3 Sta. Potenciana St., Urdaneta Village)

April 14, Thursday

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel

NEXT WEEK:

Holy Week - schedule of services on the insert.