

TRINITY NEWS

Lent V Foretaste of Resurrection in the Resuscitation of Lazarus

Series like **The Walking Dead** and **Grimm** and their popularity show a quirky interest in what happens to the dead. The Walking Dead has rotted bodies walking around and Grimm has those marked by its curse turning from people into monsters, though not always with evil intent. But violence is always at hand because that seems to sell and attract. **Sons of Anarchy** and an incredibly brutal series called **The Following** are dangerous fodder for the human mind and our ultimate source of reference, the soul. Prescriptions against such shows are of course useless, but we can make our choices with the stop button. Surely there is enough violence and death in the **News** to satisfy any such need. It is all around us. It is also within us, and that may be the source of the attraction.

The story before us today in the gospel is that of a friend of Jesus called Lazarus being raised from the dead in resuscitation. It is not resurrection because that does not return a person to life in society. Resurrection sets a person on the journey into the heart of God that has no return ticket, except in a cataclysmic return that will affect all of us.

Even an apparently simple statement has complexity behind it, and a clear sign of maturity in someone is demonstrated when they recognise the complexity in every human relationship. The search for simplistic answers only reveals simplistic solutions without depth, perception or durability. The complexity here in the relationships involved escalates beyond our comprehension in the 21st century. Everyone in this scene struggles to come to terms with this glimpse of the unknown, and this glimpse of the person who is initiating it. We also struggle with it.

When Jesus heard about the sickness of Lazarus from Martha and Mary he did not go at once to Bethany near Jerusalem. His disciples were afraid for him if he returned anywhere near the seat of power in Jerusalem. Jesus is later castigated by Martha and Mary for not being there when their brother died. Mary, who is commended by Jesus elsewhere for sitting at his feet in contemplation, does not hesitate to scold him here. But the criticism does imply a trust that he could have prevented the death of Lazarus. The complexities of the dialogues between Jesus and his disciples and with Mary and Martha escape us in the few brief comments that we are given.

We should always distinguish between **the permissive will of God and the active will of God**. God does not **cause** evil or suffering to happen to anyone, but God does **permit** things for which we have no explanation. “We know that God works out all things for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8:28). This is truer to the Greek text and Paul’s other writings than saying “all things work together for good” as in the Authorised Version of this text. All **things** do not work together for good, **but God in his active will works together with us for eventual good no matter what the circumstances might present**. But don’t tell that to someone whose child has been raped and murdered. The outcome for Lazarus breathes new life. We know little of what his response was to this incredible happening in his life, but we do know that there was a plot to kill him because he would always be a living witness to the immense spiritual connection with God and the power to bring new life that resided in his friend Jesus of Nazareth. That is, the one called Messiah by Martha that day, in the Scriptures and in the Church.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Monday, April 7.

- Finance Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Parish Office.

Wednesday, April 9. HOLIDAY.

Office closed. [NOTE: LENTEN STUDY RESUMES ON APRIL 16 after the 7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist.]

Thursday, April 10.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00 a.m., Chapel

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

APRIL 13. PALM SUNDAY.

- Blessing of the Palms & Holy Eucharist, 7:30 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.

APRIL 14-APRIL 16. MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY.

- Holy Eucharist, 7:00 p.m.

APRIL 17. MAUNDY THURSDAY.

- Holy Eucharist & Washing of the feet, 7:00 p.m.

APRIL 18. GOOD FRIDAY.

- Stations of the Cross, 11:00 a.m.
- Liturgy of Good Friday, 12 noon.

APRIL 20. EASTER SUNDAY.

- Holy Eucharist, 7:30 & 9:30 a.m. *Easter egg hunt for the Sunday School children follows after the 9:30 a.m. Eucharist.*

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

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