

March 29, 2020 John 11: 1-45 & Ez 37:12-14

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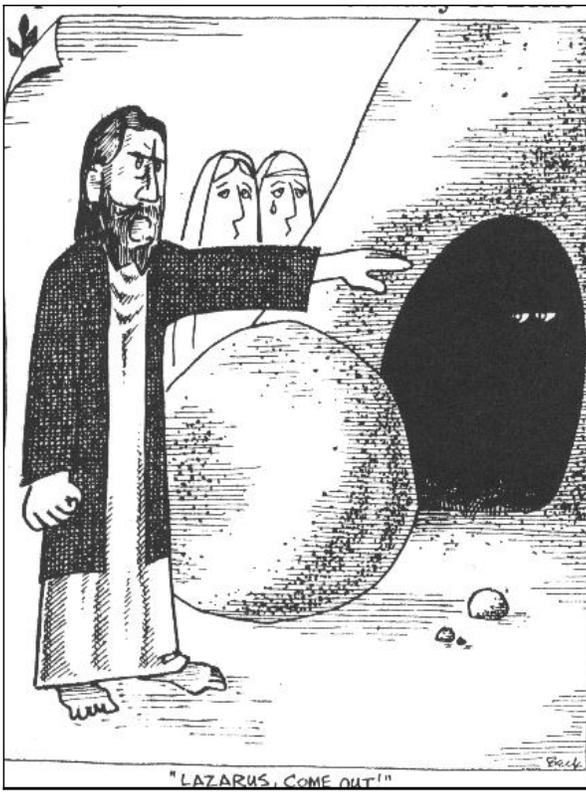
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ENTERING THE SCENE:

Having died once, our Lazarus seems reluctant to come out of the tomb. All we see are his two eyes and the tips of his toes. With what we are beginning to know from reports of people who have clinically died, is they often have to struggle with whether to come back to live in space and time after getting a taste of the beyond. It is often their love for those who need them that is the critical in their choice. Lazarus, whose two sisters would be very vulnerable without him seems to have chosen for this same reason. So it is love for others that gives him, and us, our reason to live. How is this Lent helping you to sharpen your awareness of Jesus' love for?

John 11:1-45

1 Now a man named **Lazarus** was sick. He was from **Bethany**, the village of **Mary** and her sister **Martha**. 2 This **Mary**, whose brother **Lazarus** now lay sick, was the same one who **poured perfume** on the

Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. 3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "**Lord, the one you love** is sick."

4 When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in **death**. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." 5 Jesus loved **Martha** and her sister and **Lazarus**. 6 Yet when he heard that **Lazarus** was sick, he stayed where he was **two more days**. 7 Then he said to his **disciples**, "Let us go back to **Judea**." 8 But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews **tried to stone you**, and yet you are going back there?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who **walks by day** will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. 10 It is when he **walks by night** that he stumbles, for he has no light."

11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend **Lazarus** has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." 12 His **disciples** replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." 13 Jesus had been speaking of his **death**, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. 14 So then he told them plainly, "**Lazarus is dead**, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so **that you may believe**. But let us go to him." 16 Then **Thomas** (called Didymus) said to the rest of the **disciples**, "Let us also go, that **we may die with him**." 17 On his arrival, Jesus found that **Lazarus** had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 **Bethany** was less than **two miles** from **Jerusalem**, 19 and many Jews had come to **Martha** and **Mary** to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 20 When **Martha** heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but **Mary** stayed at home. 21 Lord," **Martha** said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have **died**. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will **rise again**." 24 **Martha** answered, "I know he will rise again in the **resurrection** at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection** and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he **dies**; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will **never die**. **Do you believe this?**"

27 Yes, Lord," she told him, "**I believe** that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world." 28 And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister **Mary** aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." 29 When **Mary** heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet **entered the village**, but was still at the place where **Martha** had met him. 31 When the Jews who had been with **Mary** in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to **mourn** there. 32 When **Mary** reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother **would not have died**." 33 When Jesus saw her **weeping**, and the Jews who had come along with her also **weeping**, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. 35 **Jesus wept**. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how **he loved him!**" 37 But some of them said, "Could

not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have **kept this man from dying?**" 38 Jesus, once more **deeply moved**, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 **Take away the stone**," he said. "But, Lord," said **Martha**, the sister of the **dead man**, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there **four days**." 40 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the **glory of God?**" 41 So they **took away the stone**. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, **that they may believe** that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "**Lazarus, come out!**" 44 The **dead man came out**, his hands and feet **wrapped with strips of linen**, and a **cloth around his face**. Jesus said to them, "**Take off the grave clothes** and let him go." 45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit **Mary**, and had seen what Jesus did, **put their faith in him**. 46 But some of them

went to the **Pharisees** and told them what Jesus had done. 47 Then the **chief priests** and the **Pharisees** called a meeting of the **Sanhedrin**.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Jesus called Lazarus came back to life because of his love for him and his sisters. How does loving others call you to life? (Jn. 11: 1-45)

PRAYER: Jesus, often like Martha and Mary, I am so caught up in the needs of the here and now I am blinded to the deep love that you have for me. If I could only truly trust in the promise of my resurrection, I know that would make all the difference. Help me to put my faith in you, so that I can truly rest in your promise. Amen.