



ST. MARY'S
ON THE HIGHLANDS

The Fifth Sunday in Lent



Lent V, March 22

Collect

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

John 11:1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Thomas, who was called

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John 11:1-45 (continued)

the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of

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John 11:1-45 (continued)

said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

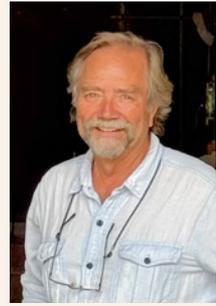
Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

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A MAN AND HIS FRIEND

By Kelly Seibels



My first thought was about a man and his friend, maybe his best friend. Hopefully we go through life blessed with a family of loved ones and a circle of close friends. And in that circle, there may be one, one who is your very best friend, who for a lifetime has shared your pain, and you his. When you hurt, he hurts, and when he calls in his darkest hour... you go.

Lazarus was Jesus's great friend, brother of Mary and Martha, and he lay dying in Bethany. The sisters sent word to Jesus who was 15 furlongs, about 2 miles away. The disciples warned him that if he went, he might get stoned. Jesus replied "if any man walks in the day, he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world." And so they went.

Jesus knew his friend was already dead but saw this as an opportunity to show God's hand. He met Martha outside of town and told her that her brother would rise again. He then said "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Mary came to where they were and was weeping. She fell down at Jesus's feet and said "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And "Jesus wept." They all saw how much Jesus had loved his friend and wondered why this man, who could open the eyes of the blind, would let his friend die.

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A Man and His Friend (continued)

Jesus groaned as he came to the cave and told them to take away the stone. He told Martha that if she would only believe, she would see the glory of God, and they took away the stone. He then lifted up his eyes to the Lord and thanked him for hearing him, for the people that were standing by, may believe that the Lord had truly sent him.

Jesus cried with a loud voice , “Lazarus, come forth.” And he did.... And those that came believed.”

Only Jesus can raise the dead, but we can go to our friend and we can raise their spirits. My first thought was about a man and his friend.

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Hymn 145 “Now quit your care and anxious fear”

Now quit your care and anxious fear and worry; for schemes are vain
and fretting brings no gain.
Lent calls to prayer, to trust and dedication; God brings new beauty nigh;
reply, reply, reply with love to love most high.

To bow the head in sackcloth and in ashes, or rend the soul,
such grief is not Lent's goal;
but to be led to where God's glory flashes, his beauty to come near.
Make clear, make clear, make clear where truth and light appear.

For is not this the fast that I have chosen? (The prophet spoke)
To shatter every yoke,
of wickedness the grievous bands to loosen, oppression put to flight,
to fight, to fight, to fight till every wrong's set right.

For righteousness and peace will show their faces
to those who feed the hungry in their need, and wrongs redress, who build the old
waste places,
and in the darkness shine.
Divine, divine, divine it is when all combine!

Then shall your light break forth as doth the morning; your health shall spring,
the friends you make shall bring God's glory bright, your way through life adorning;
and love shall be the prize.
Arise, arise, arise! and make a paradise!

Hymn 145 “Now quit your care and anxious fear”
Words: Percy Dearmer (1867-1936), alt.
Tune: *Quittez, Pasteurs*, French carol; harm. Martin
Fallas Shaw (1875-1958). [Click the image to listen.](#)



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DO NOT BE AFRAID (OF LENT)

By Callie Gilchrist



Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. Surely, I will help you. Surely, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

For years, in my mind, Lent was dreadful! In my previous choir, I knew Lent was coming because we started practicing and singing all of the music in Latin. I didn't know Latin, so it was tedious, packed with flat and low notes, and negative messages about 40 days in the wilderness. Lent was a "downer" season in that people were "giving up" things that made them happy. All I wanted to give up was "3 putts."

Several years ago, I participated in a Saturday morning mini-seminar at my Church that offered a better understanding of the season of Lent and its value to me as a Christian. I learned that it is a time of meditation, observation and reflection. It is a time of comfort as we slow down and read the reassurances of the scriptures. It is a time to "clean out" the clutter in our minds and focus on our God.

I chose Hymn 145 because instead of talking about the 40 days and walking through the wilderness (Ugh!), it starts with "Now quit your care and anxious fear and worry; for schemes are vain and fretting brings no gain. Lent calls to prayer, to trust and dedication; God brings new beauty nigh; reply, reply, reply with love, to love most high." There it is. It is the purpose of Lent and all God asks of us. He puts it right in our laps- 40 days dedicated to calming down and focusing on prayer and the scriptures via music, Bible Study, devotionals, books, etc. His promises of love and his power are repeated over and over again in the scriptures, if we will just come to him. All we have to do is give

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Do Not Be Afraid (of Lent) continued

our worries to him, open our hearts to the love that he promises, and trust.

I encourage you to enjoy these weeks of Lent. Answer God's invitation to "prayer, to trust and dedication". Be careful. You might just find yourself surrounded by God's love that "upholds you with his righteous right hand".

