

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

## **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

### **Reading I Ezekiel 37:12-14**

Thus says the Lord GOD: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus you shall know that I am the LORD. I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

### **Responsorial Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8**

**R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.** Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication. **R.**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, LORD, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered. **R.**

I trust in the LORD; my soul trusts in his word. More than sentinels wait for the dawn, let Israel wait for the LORD. **R.**

For with the LORD is kindness and with him is plenteous redemption; And he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities. **R.**

### **Reading II Romans 8:8-11**

Brothers and sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

### **Verse Before the Gospel John 11:25a, 26**

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!** I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die. **R.**

### **Gospel John 11:1-45**

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother

Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him 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." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him." When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. 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 to him, "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." When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell 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 had come with her weeping, 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.

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### **MEDITATION: JOHN 11:1-45**

*I have come to believe that you are the Christ.*

*(John 11:27)*

Martha's faith was being tested. Surely she thought that once she sent word to Jesus that Lazarus was sick, he would come quickly to heal him. And yet John tells us that although Jesus "loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus," he "remained for two days in the place where he was" (John 11:5, 6). How painful it must have been for Martha to watch helplessly as her brother died! How she must have wondered why Jesus hadn't come sooner! When Jesus does finally show up, Martha doesn't hide her disappointment. If he had arrived in time, she tells him, "my brother would not have died" (John 11:21). Yet her faith remains firmly intact: "Even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you" (11:22). And when Jesus tells her that her brother will rise, she proclaims her belief "in the resurrection on the last day" (11:24). Martha must have been overjoyed when Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb! Martha's faith even in disappointment can be an inspiration for us, especially when we have "sent word" to Jesus, but he seems to be absent (John 11:3). Today's Gospel shows us that when the Lord's ways are confusing, he always has us on his heart and mind. He hears our prayers and has a plan for our lives even when we can't envision it. Martha came to believe that Jesus had the power to raise the dead and that his plans were higher than hers. Even though he hadn't healed her brother, she still trusted him. So when you are in a place of waiting or disappointment, you can bring your pain to Jesus. You can allow him to reassure you that he is your loving Savior. He will strengthen your faith and hope. He will help you see his goodness in this life and, even more, in the life to come. Always remember that Jesus hears your prayers. He will never, ever forsake you.

***"Lord, I put my trust in you!"***

**SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026**

### **Questions for Reflection or Discussion**

1. The first reading begins with these words: "Thus says the Lord GOD: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live." It ends with these words: "I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD." In what way do these words from the first reading refer to

what happens at Baptism? "I will put my spirit in you that you may live." What practical steps can you take to help you focus on and be more sensitive to the fact that the very Spirit of the Living God is present within you?

2. The responsorial psalm opens with this heartfelt cry of the psalmist: "Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication." It then goes on to describe the Lord's forgiveness, kindness, and the redemption -- and the psalmist's great "trust in the Lord." In what way does the opening cry of the psalmist lead to the words that follow in the psalm? What can you learn from this psalm regarding how to approach the Eucharist, or your times of prayer, with a deeper trust in the Lord's forgiveness, kindness, and redemption?

3. The second reading begins with these words: "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." It continues with these words: "But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you." What do these words mean to you? Do they fill you with a hope, confidence, and trust in the Lord or do they fill you with fear? Why?

4. In the Gospel, Jesus receives a message from Mary and Martha that their brother Lazarus is ill. He responds to the message in this way: "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." After Jesus heard that his friend Lazarus was seriously ill, why do you think he stayed where he was for two more days before going "back to Judea"? In what way, can this reading give us hope when we think God is delaying in answering our prayers?

5. The meditation states "when the Lord's ways are confusing, he always has us on his heart and mind." Are you able to accept that the Lord's ways may still be confusing to you? Are you able to accept what you don't understand? Why or why not? What might you be able to do to better recognize and trust that he "will never, ever forsake you?"

Take some time to pray for greater trust in the Lord's ways, even when we don't understand. Use the prayer from the end of the meditation as the starting point.