

**Fifth Sunday of Lent**  
**March 22, 2015**  
**11:00 a.m. Mass - Scrutiny Mass**

When we study the Gospel of John people tend to understand Jesus' words in a human way but Jesus wants to raise, or better yet, to resurrect people's thinking and understanding to a new higher way of looking at life.

His words surprise people, because he's asking them to see him in a new way, to think in a new way. And so we come to today's Gospel where Jesus said to Martha, "Your brother will rise."

Martha professed her faith in the resurrection at the last day, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." But Jesus wants to take her to a new understanding of resurrection.

Jesus wants Martha to know that it is through Jesus himself that Lazarus will rise again, "I *am* the resurrection and the life...Do you believe this?"

Jesus also wants Martha and us to know that for anyone who believes in Jesus, physical death isn't really death at all because He told us "whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live."

When we live as Jesus calls us to, there is a continuation from this life to the next. When we live as disciples of Jesus it is as if we will almost not notice passing from this life to the next because spiritually we will never die. So the resurrection is not just something in the future, Jesus offers life *now*. The new life in the resurrection is for *today*.

To prove his words to Martha, Jesus raised Lazarus. The raising of Lazarus from

the dead should teach us not to waste our lives in vain pursuits and possessions. Jesus wants us to live in him, with him and through him now so our passing from this life to the next will cease to cause anxiety and dread.

So how can we live this life of Jesus now? This question is important for all of us, but especially for our three catechumens who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil.

Well, the answer is Jesus offers us his life every time we come to Mass, every time we receive the sacraments, every time we pray, every time we read Sacred Scripture.

The preface for Mass today tells us, "In his love for us all, Christ gives us the sacraments to lift us up to everlasting life. In the sacraments we touch Jesus and Jesus comes to us. Jesus gave us the sacraments to lift us up to everlasting life.

So in these final days of Lent as we prepare to enter into Holy Week, we need to ask ourselves: Are we ready to cooperate with him in the resurrected life? Are we ready to roll away the stone that stands between us and the light of Christ's face? Are we ready to forgive one another and let go of all bitterness and anger?

These are just some of the ways we cooperate with God in the miracle of bringing us back to life and resurrecting us as individuals, as a church, and a nation.