



PRAY

This week our time of prayer invites us to remember those who have died...

We pause for a moment to remember those we have known and loved who now share eternal life with God...

As we remember them, and trust in God's promise of new life, we listen to the words of this poem:

What is dying? I am standing on the sea shore. A ship sails and spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength and I stand and watch her till at last she fades on the horizon, and someone at my side says, "She is gone!" Gone where? Gone from my sight, that is all; she is just as large in mast and spar and hull as ever she was when she left my side; and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of her destination. Her diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her, and just at that moment when someone at my side says, "She is gone!" there are other eyes watching her coming and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!" And that is dying.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace..

*We give thanks for our time of prayer as we say: **Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***



ACT

Having listened to the Scriptures, yourself and each other, as well as encountering God in prayer, is there something you feel you might do in response?

- Recall, with gratitude, the life of someone you know who has died and continue to pray for them.
- Take up the challenge to help someone who feels bound up by something in their life.
- How can you build Hope inspired by the person of Lazarus?

Archdiocese of Dublin

Office of Mission and Ministry

People of Hope: LAZARUS



Small community gathering resource
in preparation for:
5th Sunday Lent 2023



GATHER

Take a moment to greet each other and share anything that has stayed with you since last week.

You may wish to pause for a moment to prepare to listen to God's Word.



HEAR

We listen now to words from the Gospel of John

[Jn11:17,20-27,33-35,38-45]



On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said: 'I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: 'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'



REFLECT

Take some time to share your thoughts and responses using the following questions. Remember to allow time for everyone to share and to listen with intention and respect.

- ◆ *What is staying with you after hearing the scriptures?*
- ◆ *In what ways is Lazarus a person of Hope in the reading?*
- ◆ *What are you noticing about the image on the front of the booklet?*
- ◆ *Jesus says, "If anyone believes in me, even though they die, they will live and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" - Do you believe this? What do you think he means?*
- ◆ *Who are the people you know who feel bound up by something or struggling to live life to the full? Is there something you can say or do to help them?*

You may want to use this space to note any thoughts or reflections...