



LENT

Faith Conversations

Week of March 22-28

SUNDAY READINGS: *Ezekiel 37: 12-14, Psalm 130, Romans 8: 8-11, John 11: 1-45*

ADULT REFLECTION

This Sunday's readings center on the theme of resurrection as we near the end of Lent. Ezekiel prophesies that God will raise his people from their graves and put his own spirit in them. Paul reminds the Romans that the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in them and "will give life to your mortal bodies also," and in the Gospel, Jesus raises his friend Lazarus from the dead.

"Resurrection" may roll off our tongues but it should knock us over! Let yourself be rocked by these readings, especially the Gospel. A man dies and is buried. Four days later, Jesus does the impossible. He calls Lazarus from his grave. Back to life!

Here's another powerful detail. "And Jesus wept." Jesus—almighty God, capable of giving life back to Lazarus—was so moved at the pain of his friends, he cried. Where else do we see such power paired with such compassion? Unlike world leaders, God doesn't need to protect his power to keep it. His tender heart is accessible to all. His power flows from his life-giving love.

And so, the Father sends the Holy Spirit to us at Baptism. The same Spirit that powerfully raised Jesus from the dead. We have been invited to enter into the tender heart of God—to share in God's own life.

Reflection Questions:

- *Sharing in God's life doesn't make us gods or "pieces of God," nor shield us from experiencing our humanity — including our own death. So what does it mean to share in God's life? How does Jesus help you live life in abundance, fully?*

FAMILY CONVERSATION STARTERS

Have you heard of someone having a near-death-experience? Such people talk about it changing how they see their lives. Why do you think that is? Have you ever had an experience that changed your perspective on life in a lasting way?

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says, "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." Even saints die, so what is Jesus talking about? He could be talking about our souls going to heaven, or our bodies rejoining our souls one day. Hope of heaven is a game-changer. But could Jesus be talking about another difference he can make in life here and now — with all its ups and downs? "I am the life." "I came that they may have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). How is Jesus our life?



PRAYER

Jesus, there is so much sickness, sadness, and dying in our world. It can make us heavy-hearted. Call to us, like you did to Lazarus! Invite us to new life in you. Help us bring your compassion to others, that they, too, may believe in you. Amen.



FASTING

Set aside your normal TV show to watch an episode of *The Chosen* this week. Reflect on the difference Jesus makes in the lives of the people he touches.



ALMSGIVING

Reach out in love to someone near death (either close to death themselves, or someone who has recently lost a loved one) with a visit, a hot meal, a listening ear, or offering to pray together.



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