

Mysteries

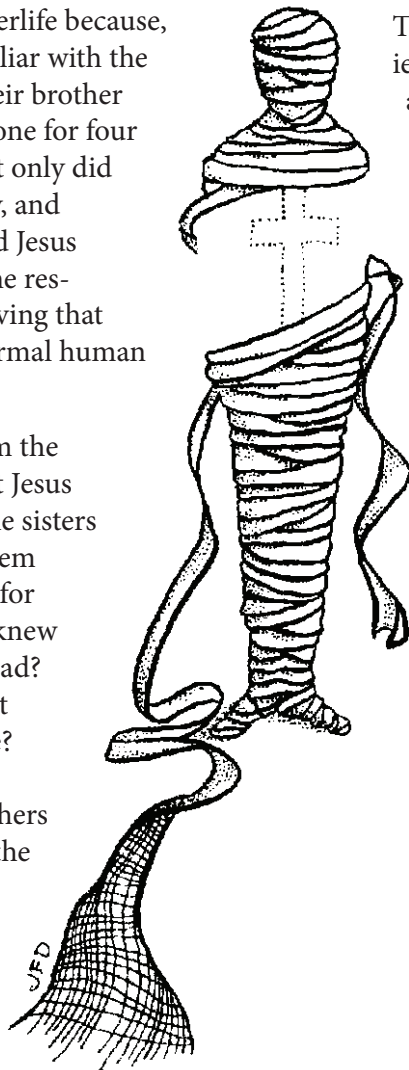
This Week's Readings at Mass

- Ezekiel 37:12-14 • Promise of resurrection
- Romans 8:8-11 • The flesh and the Spirit
- John 11:1-45 • The raising of Lazarus

The first reading from Ezekiel is perfectly paired with the Gospel reading of the raising of Lazarus. Ezekiel hears God say very clearly that God will raise his people from the dead, animating them with the spirit that will bring them back to life. The second reading from St. Paul also addresses the Jewish and Christian theological question, "Is death the end of everything?" Paul is as emphatic as Ezekiel. No. "The One who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also."

Of course, it might seem easy to believe in life after death until we have had a loved one die. Martha and Mary might have believed in an afterlife because, as Jews, they would have been familiar with the promise from Ezekiel. Yet when their brother died and the reality of him being gone for four days sank in, they doubted too. Not only did they doubt, but they grieved deeply, and even got angry at Jesus. Martha told Jesus she believes Lazarus "will rise, in the resurrection on the last day," but believing that didn't lessen her other perfectly normal human emotions.

Even after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, mysteries remain. Why didn't Jesus go to Lazarus immediately when the sisters summoned him? Why did he let them experience heart-breaking sadness for four days? Why did Jesus cry if he knew he would raise Lazarus from the dead? Why did Jesus raise Lazarus but not others who died during his lifetime? Why do some people today get to experience healing miracles, but others don't? Why do we have to wait for the resurrection of the dead to see our loved ones again?



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"You shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and have you rise from them."

Sheepish Question:
In what ways do I need to strengthen my belief in God's power, particularly in the truth of resurrection?

These readings today don't solve any mysteries of our faith. They don't give us answers about God, but they point to the complete conviction of three different biblical writers who do not doubt that Jesus is "the resurrection and the life."

Questions of the Week

- 1 What most stands out to you when you hear the Gospel reading today? Why?
- 2 If you have lost a loved one(s), did that affect on what you believe about the afterlife? How so?

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