

APRIL 2, 2017



FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



EZEKIEL 37:12 -14

PSALM 138:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

ROMANS 8:8 -11

JOHN 11:1-45 OR 11:3-7,
17, 28-27, 33B-45

REFLECTION

My husband, Mike, and I were friends for a couple years before we realized we were in love with each other. I was doing a lot of growing up during those years—dealing with family issues, a painful breakup, and living far from home for the first time. Looking back, I'm sure I was depressed. I had never experienced so much uncertainty and heartache. There were nights that I cried so hard I almost wished I wouldn't wake up in the morning. Somewhere along the way—through prayer, counseling, and deep friendships—I turned a corner. I can't tell you the exact moment; it was a gradual awakening. Mike noticed it, too, and something he said to me stuck with me: "You've been so vibrant lately. It's like a part of you has come alive again." It felt good to feel fully alive, to engage the world in all colors of the rainbow rather than black and white. There's a parallel with the Lazarus story and our journey toward Easter: it's all about dying to new life. When we are fully alive, embracing the wonderfulness that comes with being human, we reflect something wonderful about God.

ACTION

What it must have been like for Lazarus to have been brought back to life! Close your eyes. Put yourself in Lazarus' place. Consider him lying there motionless, dead, in the dark with hands and feet bound together. Suddenly, the stone rolls away, a crack of light appears, and the voice of Jesus rings out, saying, "Lazarus, come out!" Can you imagine what came next? Where am I? I'm scared. What just happened? Why is that light so bright? Lazarus rose, was untied, and set free. This story is about hope, about our own journey from death to new life, and it's not easy. Getting there can be disorienting and difficult. Sometimes it's safer to stuff our emotions rather than to face whatever it is that's making us feel dead inside. Jesus, raised from the dead, has conquered death and calls us to live in the light. Will you answer when he calls your name and invites you to come out of your tomb?

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What part of me has died and needs to come to life again? How would my life be different if I lived each day as if it were my last?
- Why did Jesus weep, when he knew he was going to raise Lazarus anyway?