



Fifth Sunday of Lent

This Sunday - the 5th in the season of Lent, is the last in the season of Lent before we begin Holy Week with Palm Sunday. Each Sunday presents a different Gospel scene occurring at different times in the three year public ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Today's Gospel recalls the *resuscitation* of Lazarus from the dead – it's not a resurrection as he will die again at a time and a place we don't know.

There are two points that might be worth considering from this now famous Gospel event. The 1st point mentions '*that Jesus openly wept*' - this emphasizes his humanity upon hearing the death of his friend. The 2nd point is that he commanded '*that he be unbound,*' these words are deep and meaningful referring to God's capacity to unbound people also from their sinful restrictive actions and attitudes towards others. Remember when we listen to God's word it is ever alive and active to strengthen, inform and guide us on our own life journey.

The 1st reading today comes from the book of Ezekiel where the author says of God, '*I am the Lord who has opened your graves and I will put my spirit in you so you can live.*' This reminds us of life beyond this world.

All of today's readings remind us '*that God's grace builds on nature,*' meaning that when we align our lives to co-operate with God's word and spirit, new life also happens within us! *Fr Martin R Maunsell*