



Lent Reflections Week 5 - Anticipating Passion and Resurrection

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26

The fifth Sunday in Lent is beginning of the period leading up to Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter sometimes called “Passiontide”. During the next couple of weeks the church’s focus will be moving through the events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus and then to his triumphant resurrection. We will be thinking about the sacrifice of Jesus as he died to bear the weight and punishment of our sins.

In one way it all begins with the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, remembered on Palm Sunday. I think it is significant that in John’s gospel immediately before this we find the account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. (John 11:1-45) The key verses are 25 and 26 which are noted above where Jesus reassures Martha that her brother will rise again. Jesus then goes on raise Lazarus physically after he had been dead for four days.

Jesus is showing his followers that he has power over death just before he himself will die on the cross. As we go through the darkness of his passion and crucifixion we have light in the distance because we know that on Easter Sunday we will be celebrating the resurrection of our Lord. The grave could not hold him. He burst out into glorious new life. Paul assures us that resurrection is for all believers:

⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:4-5)

Is it not also interesting that Paul regarded belief in the resurrection as a requirement for salvation.

⁹ If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

This reflects what Jesus asked

in our first quote, **“Do you believe this?”**

Prayer

***Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
and who rose from the dead on the third day,
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.***