



Lent reflection for Wednesday, March 29th

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John 11:17-27

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

Today's reflection is by Meredith Roberts

When Jesus arrives in Bethany, Martha & Mary have been in mourning for 4 days. It may not seem like very long, but in my experience the first few days after a death are the longest days and sleepless nights. I have become very familiar with the stages of mourning in my young life. I've lost a number of close friends and family members, with each one a fresh wave of grieving onsets. A few years ago, someone very dear to me passed away after a long battle with breast cancer. The first 24 hours after I learned the news were a blur. I experienced physical symptoms for the first time, I was nauseous and unable to eat. Physically sick and emotionally exhausted. I had never experienced severe nausea prior to this, and it is something I still struggle with today. Nearly 5 years have passed by, and I am still unable to speak about her without tears welling up. As I read John chapter 11, I am encouraged by Martha's unwavering faith. I can't even imagine the emotional rollercoaster Martha & Mary have endured. They have been grieving for 4 days, all the while knowing that if only Jesus had been there, their brother would still be alive. I imagine I would be full of anger and frustration that Jesus couldn't just return to heal my brother quickly, he

is the messiah, right? Perhaps Mary had this attitude, she did stay in the house when Jesus arrived. Martha however seeks Jesus, she is in despair but still searching for a silver lining. Jesus tells her that her brother will rise again, and she says yes! He will, on the last day when we all will rise. She didn't know what Jesus meant, and even after 4 days of mourning her brother, she still has unwavering faith. Faith in whatever God's plan is, not in her own desires. I take comfort knowing that the Lord sees the whole picture for me, and only reveals one step at a time to us. I often yearn to see the full picture, to make sense of the things happening around me. This Lenten season I pray that I can release my white knuckled grip yearning for control over my circumstances, and leave it up to the Lord. He certainly has better plans for me than I could even imagine.

Meredith lives in Prospect Lefferts Gardens with her husband Carl and their rescue greyhound, Smokey. She works in fashion design at a women's wear company. She began attending Holy Apostles in 2020, just before the pandemic, and has appreciated being able to attend virtually.

