

Even Jesus Cried

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

This isn't Easter Sunday yet, but all three scripture readings for the day anticipate God bringing humans back to life after they die. Ezekiel prophesies that God will open graves and the dead will rise from them. St. Paul promises that God's Spirit within us allows us to live, and that same Spirit will raise us from the dead, just as Jesus was raised. Finally, in the Gospel story, Jesus demonstrates God's power to raise the dead by calling Lazarus out of his tomb four days after he died.

The promise of life after death and the resurrection of our bodies is something that Christians can look forward to with hope. At the same time, hope isn't usually enough to quell our own fear when we or someone we love is dying. That hope won't cure us of our grief and despair when loved ones die, no matter how much we believe, or want to believe, in life after death.

It is then that we can take comfort in knowing that Jesus knows what it is like to lose a beloved friend. The Gospel tells us that Jesus wept outside of Lazarus' tomb—and the Greek word used for “wept” is more like deep heaving with sorrow than simply crying. Obviously Jesus also felt strong emotions at the reality of death, even though he knew Lazarus would soon be raised. If Jesus knew what it was like to lose a close friend, we can

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“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”

Sheepish Question:
How does the hope of resurrection actually affect the way I live?

take consolation in knowing that he understands our suffering when we lose a loved one.

Questions of the Week

- 1 Is it any consolation to you to know that Jesus cried after the death of his friend? How so?
- 2 If you have experienced the death of a loved one, does the promise of resurrection bring you any peace? Why or why not?

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