



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year A, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



Intermediate Session

Ezekiel 37:12-14

John 11:1-45

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus,

by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

You are the savior of the world.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection



The theme for today is Jesus' saving event, the Paschal Mystery. Provide twigs and bendable wire for making crosses. Invite each child to make a cross. Discuss:

- How does the cross represent the suffering and resurrection of Jesus?
- How do we share in Jesus' suffering?
- How do we share in Jesus' resurrection?

Allow time for discussion. On this Fifth Sunday of Lent we are reminded that from Jesus' death on the cross came new life.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to find out what God promises the people.

Read Ezekiel 37:12-14.

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Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

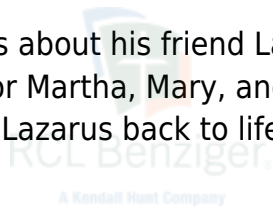
- What does God promise the people?
- How will the people receive God's Spirit?
- How are the people given hope?

In today's Gospel listen to find out how Jesus brings his friend Lazarus back to life.

Read John 11:1-45.

Allow for silence.

- What happens when Jesus hears about his friend Lazarus?
- How does Jesus show his love for Martha, Mary, and Lazarus?
- How does Jesus bring his friend Lazarus back to life?



Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

In today's Old Testament reading the prophet Ezekiel helps to restore hope for the despairing people of Israel. Ezekiel uses the imagery of dead bodies rising from the grave to announce God's promise of new life to the people. God's promise to "put my spirit in you that you may live" brings comfort and reassurance to the Israelites. Not surprisingly, Christian tradition finds the promise of personal resurrection to every Christian in today's passage.

In the Gospel today, Jesus performs his greatest miracle. It is clear that Jesus loves Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, and he is saddened by the loss of his friend Lazarus. However, Jesus knows that his friend will rise again so that the Son of God may be glorified. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. In raising Lazarus from death to life, Jesus proves what he says in



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verses 25-26: "I am the resurrection and the life: whoever believes in me, though he should die, will come to life; and whoever is alive and believes in me will never die." Today's Gospel focuses on the journey from death into life and it sheds light on the saving events of Christ's dying and rising, his Paschal Mystery.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What do today's readings teach about eternal life?
- How does the raising of Lazarus relate to Jesus' death and resurrection?
- What helps you get through times of suffering?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Paschal Mystery in the Sacraments

The Paschal Mystery of Christ is the term that encompasses the saving event of Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension and sending of the Spirit. All God's promises of redemption are fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery. The life and saving event of Jesus is passed over to the Church in the celebration of the sacraments. The sacraments communicate God's saving grace to believers today.

When we take part in the liturgy we celebrate Christ's Paschal Mystery. Easter is the prime moment when the Paschal Mystery is celebrated. But it is not only on Sunday and Easter that the Paschal Mystery is made real in the life of believers. The saving event of Jesus is realized every time there is healing after loss and whenever hope overcomes despair.

- What is the Paschal Mystery?
- How do the Sacraments celebrate God's saving grace?
- Where do you find hope in hard times?



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The Gospel in Life

Take home the cross you made and take the time to thank Jesus for his great love for you.

