

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 13, 2005

Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

Preaching by: S. Noreen Coleman, O.P.

What a shock it must have been for Lazarus, having died and entered into a peaceful rest, to be suddenly re-awakened to the world he had just left and to be called to resume his earthly life once again!

As he stumbled out of the tomb, still bound by his burial cloths, and taking a moment to adjust to the bright sunlight, what were his emotions as he encountered his good friend Jesus?

Was Lazarus disappointed that Jesus did not leave him in his state of well-deserved happiness? If Jesus loved him so much, as John tells us today, why did he ask this of him? Was he angry, knowing that one day he would have to relive the experience of illness and death and go through all that suffering again?

Or, we'd like to think, was Lazarus honored that he could become an instrument in Jesus' hands to prove a powerful point to the incredulous of his day?

Are there times when we are suddenly jolted from our status quo, perfectly content in our well-earned comfort zone, and invited to be "used" by Jesus to bring the powerful message of God's love and mercy to a needy world?

What is our response in those instances? Do we grudgingly ask Jesus to leave us alone if he really loves us--haven't we done enough for Him already? Why us again? We're tired, let somebody else do it!

Or, do we welcome the opportunity to allow Jesus to reach out to others through us? As we fumble along awkwardly in our weakness, we are empowered by the bright light of his love. Do we then willingly give him our hands so that his healing touch can continue to work daily life-giving miracles for his sisters and brothers?

Let Jesus, now, through John, ask one final question as we dare to wonder what's in store for us if we give of ourselves wholeheartedly in this way:

"Did I not tell you that... you will see the glory of God?"