

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, March 17, 2024
Fifth Sunday of Lent
Cycle B

A smartly dressed woman marched into the cemetery and confronted the funeral director. "I've looked all over the cemetery," she raged, "and I can't find my husband's grave anywhere". "What name is it, please?" asked the director. "Alec Wildenstein". The director searched through the files. "Hmm", he said. "There must be some mistake. All we have here is a Gloria Wildenstein". "No mistake", said the woman. "That's my husband, all right. Everything is in my name".

Last week's Lenten message is the movement from darkness to light. Today it is the journey from death to life. Jesus raised Lazarus, his friend, from the tomb as a powerful sign of his victory. He is the Resurrection! He is the first to rise from death and the one who has the power to raise up all who believe in him. When like Lazarus, our bodies experience death in the future, the hands of Jesus will raise us up and give us new life.

However, the focus of the gospel is not only the future death of the body and the future resurrection of the body. For most of us, it is not the priority issue, not our main concern. Rather Jesus invites us to consider another death that happens to many of us daily – not the death of the body but the death of the heart and the death of faith.

This is clearly what happens in our society today. Some people have lost the sense of God, the sense of sin and the sense of morality. Everything just comes and goes. Whatever you feel is good and is approved by the majority then it becomes your moral truth. A Bishop once said "A lie doesn't become truth, wrong doesn't become right, and evil doesn't become good, just because it is accepted by a majority".

When Jesus ordered Lazarus to come out of the tomb, Jesus manifested his power to revive the body and also the heart and faith of his disciples. Now Lazarus does not only live to eat and drink but also to relate with others, serve others, collaborate with others for the Kingdom of God. He is alive and living so that he can be an instrument of life for others.

As Lent progresses, it's time to call on the Lord and surrender our hearts to Him. There are many things we cannot change but the hand of Jesus can touch the hardness of our hearts and bring change to the hearts of others, too. So that when Easter comes, may our hearts experience freedom. May we also be willing to set other people free by forgiving, trusting, receiving, and loving them again. Let Jesus be your Resurrection and the life you share with others.