

MARCH 26, 2023
FIFTH SUNDAY
IN LENT



Jesus weeps with us.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 11:1-45	The raising of Lazarus
Monday	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Valley of dry bones
Tuesday	Romans 8:6-11	Life in the Spirit
Wednesday	Hosea 11:1-9	God's love for God's people
Thursday	Isaiah 53:4-12	The suffering servant
Friday	Luke 19:41-44	Jesus weeps over Jerusalem
Saturday	Psalms 130	Trusting in the Lord in times of trouble
Sunday	Matthew 21:1-11	Jesus enters Jerusalem

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him [Lazarus]!"
John 11:35-36 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, we are in awe of how you grieve with us and conquer sin and death so that we may experience eternal life through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for coming to us in Jesus, just as your constant love comes to us through this gift of food that gives us life each day. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the steadfast love of God give you peace and joy through Christ our Lord.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Jesus is a Rock in a
Weary Land*



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How do you find comfort when something bad happens?
- Jesus cried over Lazarus' death. How does crying help in times of sadness?

DEVOTIONS

Read: John 11:1-45.

Jesus' divinity and humanity are on full display in this story. Jesus knows that Lazarus has died. Jesus goes to Bethany to bring Lazarus back to life. Jesus announces, "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" (vv. 25-26). Jesus has power over life and death yet he weeps. Jesus, fully divine is also fully human, and he experiences the pain and sadness of the final enemy, death itself. The Apostle Paul writes of flesh and Spirit in Romans 8. For Paul, the flesh is not an earthly matter. Flesh is the power of sin that turns us away from God. The Spirit brings life born of God. Both Paul and Jesus recognize the Holy Spirit and the power of sin and death that remain in our world and in our lives. Sin is not just a personal weakness. It is a power that needs to be vanquished. Because of this destructive power, Jesus weeps. Christ's victory over sin and death is our victory. Christ shares our tears over death, the final enemy to be conquered.

Discuss: How does believing in Jesus give you comfort during times of death and loss?

Pray: **Compassionate God, we give you our thanks and praise that in Jesus Christ you take on our humanity, weep with us, and give us hope by conquering sin and death. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you comfort someone who is going through tough times?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Lent is a period of forty days when we focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare for Easter. Almsgiving is the tradition or practice of giving money or food to those in need. This week decide where you will donate the money from the Almsgiving Box you have had in your home during Lent. Deliver the money to where it can be distributed to those in need.

Pray: **Loving God, we thank you for the blessings in our lives. Help us to be aware of those in need and give of our time, money, and care for others in response to your great love. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org