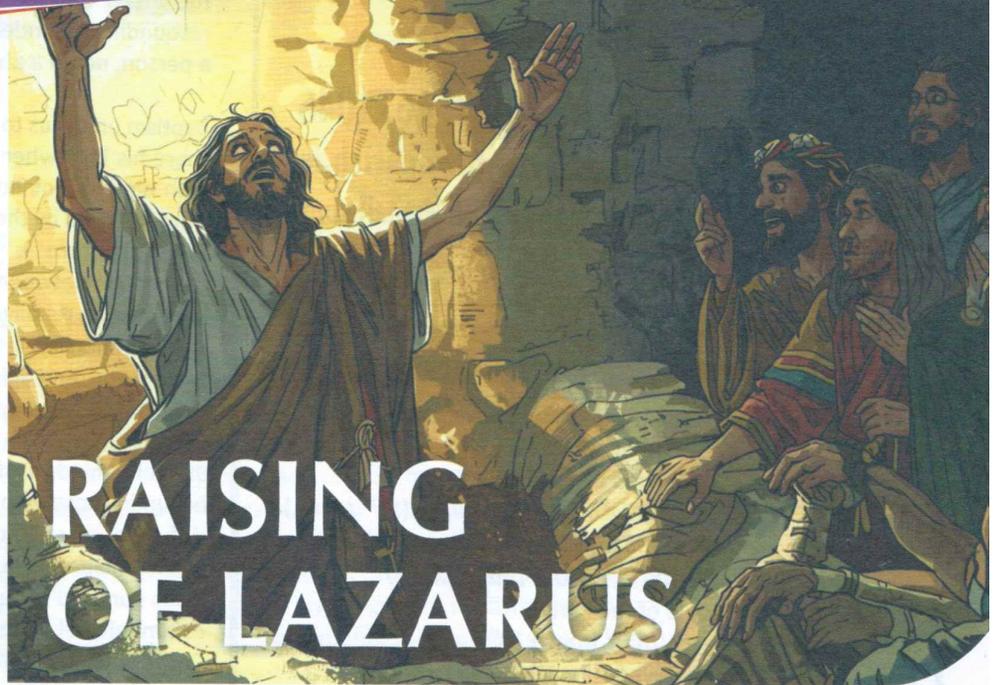




**T**he raising of Lazarus is the seventh and most crucial sign/miracle in John's Gospel, since it directly foreshadows Jesus' own death and resurrection. Surprisingly, it is not mentioned by the other evangelists. When Lazarus fell sick, Mary and Martha sent a message to their friend Jesus, the healer. The sisters were in Bethany a day away. However, Jesus delayed for two days before spending a day getting to Bethany. By now, it was the fourth day, and Jesus had told his disciples that Lazarus had already died. The disciples pointed out the danger of making the trip because his enemies among the Jerusalem elite were out to attack him.

In the next section, verses 17-37, Jesus comforted the two sisters of Lazarus. In verse 20, we are told that Martha came out to meet him. She made a lovely profession of faith in him as a healer, whose prayers were always answered by God. When Jesus said that her brother would rise again, she affirmed the fact that he would rise on the last day. Then Jesus revealed that he was and is the Resurrection and the Life. This is one of seven famous 'I am' statements in John's Gospel. Martha responded with an



## RAISING OF LAZARUS

inspired declaration of faith when she said, like St Peter at Caesarea Philippi, 'I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who has come into the world.' At that point, Martha went back home to tell her sister Mary that the teacher had arrived and was asking for her.

Verses 38-41 bring the story to its climax when Jesus asks for the stone in front of the tomb to be rolled away. Martha protested that, by now, her brother would be in a state of decomposition. 'Lazarus, here, come out!' cried Jesus. His words contained the power to do what they said (cf. Is 55:11). Lazarus came forth from

the tomb. When word of this great miracle was reported to the authorities in Jerusalem, it increased their hostility against Jesus. That antipathy would soon lead to his Crucifixion. The evangelist has placed the Lazarus story at this point in his Gospel for theological reasons. Jesus goes to his death as the one who is the Resurrection and the Life. As he declared, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

— Pat Collins

### THE COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command ...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, ...**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, ...

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.**

Lord Jesus Christ, ...

**Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And with your spirit.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins, ...**

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

**Communion Antiphon** (Cf. Jn 11:26)

**Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.**

**Prayer after Communion**

We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Amen.**



### Reflection

Jesus said to Martha, 'I am the resurrection and the life ... Do you believe this?'



### Lesson

With Martha, renew your belief in Jesus as the unique One from God.



### Prayer

Lord, our God, You have given us the gift of life as a sharing in your own life.