

LENT HOUSE GROUPS 2026

SESSION 5: I am the resurrection and the life



“For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.”
- Psalm 36:9

Enter the Sacred Space (5 minutes)

The leader invites all to enter into a prayerful presence to the Holy Spirit, whose guidance we seek during our time together. During this prayerful silence, we give thanks for the opportunity of this time together, for the presence and gift of each other and ask for the grace of the Spirit to flow unimpeded during the session. All pray in silence for all, that each may receive light and healing

Pray and Share (15 minutes)

Leader: We gather in the name of the Father:

Who breathed into creatures of clay and made them in to living beings.

Leader: We gather in the name of the Son:

Who came that all might have life - life in all its fullness.

Leader: We gather in the name of the Spirit:

Who breathes continually into creation, bringing forth new life, new hope, new possibilities.

In a period of calm and a space of trust, each one of us is invited to share briefly one thing that has happened in the past week or your hopes for the week ahead. It could be one thing that has given you cause for concern, something shared during the last time you met as a group or something that has given you cause to celebrate.

In this moment of peace and fellowship, we pray for the good of the group. Each member is invited to offer up any personal intentions. We also pray for the good of the Church, for wisdom in our country and for the common good. Let us also bring to mind the poor, the sick and those who have died. We join together in praying:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

Spiritual Reading and Contemplation (15 minutes)

What follows is the practice of spiritual reading and journaling that we can choose to generously share with each other. Each week includes a scripture passage, a poem and a picture. Read through the materials once as a group and then each person reflects on the material in silence.

Scripture Reading

John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

At that time: The sisters of Lazarus sent to Jesus, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.'

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.'

Jesus was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be a smell, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.

Poem

Taking A Chance – Richard Harries

'Let there be life', he said, or was it she?
'atom, star, cell and plant – simply let them be'.

No; D said, they will only clash and kill'
'Yes', she replied, 'and combine with good will'.

So let some know that their life is their own
And grow by reaping the seed they have sown.

'Stop there' said D, 'They will hurt and destroy
All I foresee are seven walls of 'Troy '

'I will imbue them with hope', she replied,
'my love will draw the world close to my side.'

'I will take the risk and enter their life,
expose my heart and let it bear their strife.'

'I will let him go there, to crib and grave
From out of their self-made hells he will save.'

'I will cradle the world as Mary the child
And Christ will hold their love, however wild.'

'I will take the chance without foreseeing
They can choose, or not, to give thanks for being?'

Picture

The Raising of Lazarus - Sebastiano del Piombo



Potential Discussion Topics

- In what ways are you like Lazarus: bound and needing to be set free? What is it like to hear Jesus' words: 'unbind him (her), let him (her) go free'?
- How do you respond to Jesus' assertion 'I am the resurrection and the life'? Can you make the same response of faith as Martha?
- Do we really want to accept the resurrection into our lives as individuals, as a parish or in our wider community?
- In what ways can it be unsettling to give up old patterns of negative feelings, thoughts and behaviours? However painful they may be, they are still familiar and predictable.

Journal Notes

Optionally use this page to record your thoughts during your time of reflection

Conversation and Sharing (15 minutes)

Each person is invited to briefly share any thought or insight related to the materials that came to them during their time of reflection. This could be in the form of a simple phrase, a prayer that came to mind, an image or any other insight. It is also permissible to simply respond with silence and no one is obliged to speak.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

The leader can optionally summarise the main insights that have been shared and the meeting concludes with prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we have gathered in the warmth of this house, we thank you for this season of Lent. A time of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and reflecting on your suffering, death and resurrection. We ask you to use this time to draw us closer to your heart in deeper union with you and each other. May the lessons we learn transform us into your disciples, ready to carry your light into a world in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen