



EVEN IF YOU DIE, YOU WILL LIVE!

FIFTH SUNDAY
OF LENT
2023

GOSPEL John 11:1-45

When Jesus hears that Lazarus is sick, he remains right where he is for another two days.

He does not race to the side of his friend. He is the Lord of time, so it is he who decides when to move.

When he reaches the tomb of Lazarus, Martha says sorrowfully: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died!" Jesus fixes on her words, which are partly true, and marked by pain and love.

If you believe, he says, I am with you. And if I am with you, then everything you do is already eternal. *Those who believe in me, even if they die, will live.* Now.

Mary echoes her sister's words: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died!" This time Jesus answers the reproach with tears. Tears with tears. Sorrow upon sorrow. As if to say that the same question must be answered in two ways: by proclaiming hope and sharing grief. The two cannot be separated. So Jesus weeps.

"Untie him and let him go." The words of Jesus are liberating because no power—not even sickness, not even death—can vanquish Love. When Lazarus is freed, he proceeds on his own.

Help us, Lord, to allow life to proceed freely. Help us not to hold it back. Help us to always love freely—up to the end and even beyond that.

Fr. Alessandro Deho'