



# Small Groups

Parish Community of Saint Helen



**Sunday, March 26, 2023**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**  
**On The Right Track Week 5**

***Suggested reading for this session:***  
***Pages 150 to 185 in the Lenten Companion***

## Opening Song

[Return to God ~ John Angotti](#)

## Opening Prayer

I beg of you, my Lord,  
to remove anything which separates  
me from you, and you from me.  
Remove anything that makes me unworthy  
of your sight, your control, your rephension;  
of your speech and conversation,  
of your benevolence and love.  
Cast from me every evil  
that stands in the way of my seeing you,  
hearing, tasting, savoring, and touching you;  
fearing and being mindful of you;  
knowing, trusting, loving, and possessing you;  
being conscious of your presence  
and, as far as may be, enjoying you.  
This is what I ask for myself  
and earnestly desire from you. Amen.  
—Saint Peter Faber, SJ,

## Gospel

[Jn 11:1-45](#)

*Note: This gospel is suggested to be read by one person*

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany,  
the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

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Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil  
and dried his feet with her hair;  
it was her brother Lazarus who was ill.  
So the sisters sent word to him saying,  
“Master, the one you love is ill.”  
When Jesus heard this he said,  
“This illness is not to end in death,  
but is for the glory of God,  
that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”  
Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.  
So when he heard that he was ill,  
he remained for two days in the place where he was.  
Then after this he said to his disciples,  
“Let us go back to Judea.”  
The disciples said to him,  
“Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you,  
and you want to go back there?”  
Jesus answered,  
“Are there not twelve hours in a day?  
If one walks during the day, he does not stumble,  
because he sees the light of this world.  
But if one walks at night, he stumbles,  
because the light is not in him.”  
He said this, and then told them,  
“Our friend Lazarus is asleep,  
but I am going to awaken him.”  
So the disciples said to him,  
“Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved.”  
But Jesus was talking about his death,  
while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep.  
So then Jesus said to them clearly,  
“Lazarus has died.  
And I am glad for you that I was not there,  
that you may believe.  
Let us go to him.”  
So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples,  
“Let us also go to die with him.”  
When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus  
had already been in the tomb for four days.  
Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away.  
And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary  
to comfort them about their brother.  
When Martha heard that Jesus was coming,

she went to meet him;  
but Mary sat at home.  
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 of God,  
God will give you.”  
Jesus said to her,  
“Your brother will rise.”  
Martha said to him,  
“I know he will rise,  
in the resurrection on the last day.”  
Jesus told her,  
“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.  
Do you believe this?”  
She said to him, “Yes, Lord.  
I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God,  
the one who is coming into the world.”

When she had said this,  
she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying,  
“The teacher is here and is asking for you.”  
As soon as she heard this,  
she rose quickly and went to him.  
For Jesus had not yet come into the village,  
but was still where Martha had met him.  
So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her  
saw Mary get up quickly and go out,  
they followed her,  
presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there.  
When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him,  
she fell at his feet and said to him,  
“Lord, if you had been here,  
my brother would not have died.”  
When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping,  
he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said,  
“Where have you laid him?”

They said to him, "Sir, come and see."  
And Jesus wept.  
So the Jews said, "See how he loved him."  
But some of them said,  
"Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man  
have done something so that this man would not have died?"

So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb.  
It was a cave, and a stone lay across it.  
Jesus said, "Take away the stone."  
Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him,  
"Lord, by now there will be a stench;  
he has been dead for four days."  
Jesus said to her,  
"Did I not tell you that if you believe  
you will see the glory of God?"  
So they took away the stone.  
And Jesus raised his eyes and said,  
"Father, I thank you for hearing me.  
I know that you always hear me;  
but because of the crowd here I have said this,  
that they may believe that you sent me."  
And when he had said this,  
He cried out in a loud voice,  
"Lazarus, come out!"  
The dead man came out,  
tied hand and foot with burial bands,  
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.  
So Jesus said to them,  
"Untie him and let him go."

Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary  
and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

## **Reflection Video: [This Is the Way Back to God](#)**

If your group chooses to listen to the weekend Homily you can find it at:  
[sainthelen.org/podcast/](http://sainthelen.org/podcast/)

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## Discussion Questions

1. What part of the Gospel or weekend message resonated with you?
2. What are your reactions to the image on page 151?
3. Jesus says about Lazarus “unbind him and let him go.”
  - a. Take a moment to think in your heart what do you need God to unbind you from?
4. Fr. Toups tells us that Jesus is longing to give us freedom. How open are you to accepting that freedom through reconciliation?
5. Let’s look at page 181 paragraph 5 in the Lenten Companion :
  - a. *When speaking of a particular suffering or problem, people often say “Give that to God.” With respect, I do not know how to do that – and I do not find it helpful. What I do find helpful is to say, “God I give you permission to come in.”*
  - b. What is your reaction to this?
6. Which of the following gives you the most comfort regarding your future and hope?
  - a. Jesus’ promise that believers will “never die”
  - b. Jesus’ words, “I am the resurrection and the life.”
  - c. The anticipation of seeing Jesus after I die
  - d. The anticipation of seeing my loved ones in heaven
  - e. The “new body” I will have in heaven

## Closing Prayer

Ask for the group intentions ~ *Lord hear our prayer* after each

Glory Be to the Father,

And to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now

and ever shall be world without end.

Amen

## Closing Reflection Song [I Will Rise ~ Chris Tomlin](#)

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