

Fr Ryan Homily 3-26-23

Read: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

So we have another super long gospel, third in three weeks, but they're given to us to help prepare us for Palm Sunday and Holy Week that are coming up. We hear about Jesus raising this dead man back to life. And so I thought it would be good just to look at three things Jesus does here to focus our attention on – His tears, His anger, and the words come out. His tears, His anger, and the words come out; those three things to help break open our hearts this morning and lead us to change and to challenge us really. Especially as we're getting ready for the two greatest weeks of the year, Holy Week and then Easter Week, which are coming upon us rapidly. Jesus' tears, Jesus' anger, and the words come out. So first His tears. This was after Jesus meets with Martha and Mary, they bring Him to where Lazarus is buried, and Jesus does something. It tells us Jesus wept. Why? Why did Jesus cry? Jesus is about to raise this dead man back to life. He is about to turn everyone's sorrow into rejoicing. They're gonna throw a party. He is gonna do something that is beyond comprehension. He is gonna bring a dead man out of a tomb and He knows He's gonna do it so why does He cry? It's because in the face of sorrow, in the face of pain, in the face of death the loving response is to cry. Even when you know you're about to end that sorrow and show you have power over death. And God is love so Jesus doesn't look at Martha and Mary and say hey don't worry be happy, I got this. Right because these sisters are hurting. They watched their brother die. And so the first thing Jesus does when he gets there is He just enters into their pain and their sorrow. And not only does He do that for them, He does that for us here today. The Lord is just incredibly mindful of what each and every one of you and me have walked into this church today carrying. He knows your hurts and mine. He knows every one of your crosses and mine. He knows your sorrows and mine. And He doesn't just look at us and go hey it's just gonna be a little bit longer, hang in there – He weeps over that. He enters in; He becomes incredibly present like a great friend, the greatest of friends. He sits with us, and He cries. But unlike us who are powerless to change situations He's not. He's gonna do something about this situation. He does something incredible but what He does is going to cost Him. It's gonna cost Him dearly. Which brings us to the second thing we wanna focus on today because first Jesus weeps then it says He gets angry. And that might also seem strange to us because

we know, and He knows He's about to bring a man back from the dead. You'd think He would be overjoyed or giddy over all of this that's gonna happen but no He weeps and then He gets angry. And we might have missed Him getting angry because our translation is lousy, like it's really bad. It doesn't say Jesus gets angry, what it says – what we heard today – is He was deeply perturbed. He was moved with compassion. Okay I'm sorry that's a pathetic translation. It doesn't say anything like that. The Greek is something more like He quaked with rage. He bellowed with anger. That's Jesus' response when He gets to Lazarus' tomb. Deeply moved and perturbed? Like Jesus' is livid! Why? Who is He mad at? He's mad at evil. He's angry at this suffering, at pain, at death – why? Because He didn't make those things. They're not supposed to be in this world. Pain, suffering, sorrow, death, they're here because of us. Because of our sin, because of our willful rebellion against God. And so we can say well why doesn't He do something about that? Well He does. But He doesn't just wave a magic wand and make it all disappear, He doesn't just say some words. Someone I heard once put it very poetically, it's always stuck with me, they said the only way to bring Lazarus out of his tomb was for Jesus to enter a tomb. The only way for Lazarus' funeral to be interrupted was for Jesus to summon His own funeral. And so Jesus does save Lazarus from his sin, from his pain, from his death. He saves you and me from our sin and pain and death by Himself undergoing a horrific, shameful, humiliating, unimaginably painful death. Which gets us to the third point we focus on. Because when Jesus comes to stand in front of Lazarus' tomb first He weeps, then He gets angry, and third it says He cries out come out. And just as Jesus was not just weeping with Martha and Mary, He weeps with each of us and our own pains and sorrows today. So I don't think Jesus was just speaking to Lazarus back then. He's speaking to us here and now, you and me, each of us by name, screaming this morning – if you will- come out! Come out of what? What does He want you and I to come out of? Well this is where we get to the really challenging word this morning. Come out of our indifference, come out of our apathy, come out of our life of sin or that particular sin that we've grown very comfortable with in our lives. Come out of, and I don't know a better way to say this, come out of the way so many of us myself included can seem to just not really care what He's done. To not let it constantly preoccupy us. To take it for granted. To somehow think well I deserve that; that's what God should have done for me. Isn't it He's God, I'm worth that. How else do we try to explain why so many of us, myself included –

certainly when I was younger- thought nothing of missing mass. Perhaps still think nothing, even if it's only once in a while, of missing mass. How else to explain how many Catholics don't run regularly to the sacrament of reconciliation when many certainly need to. How else to explain how few Catholics give God His due in prayer every day. Aside from a quick thank you or help, nothing wrong with those prayers, but is that really the response that you and I should give to that? So we're about to enter into the holiest days of the year. A time that can be filled with extraordinary grace for each one of us, days that could potentially change our lives if we let them. They are days for us to look at the cross, to read the passion accounts in the gospel, to ask the Lord – Lord how have I responded to what you have done for me? How should I respond? What do you ask of me? Jesus asks Martha in the gospel after He says I am the resurrection and the life; He asks do you believe this? He's asking the same of us today. And undoubtedly we all say yes or we wouldn't be here but maybe immediately after that He asks can other people tell? Can He tell? Especially in what we do out there after we leave this place. So maybe just to take a moment and just pray together. Maybe you wanna close your eyes, bow your head for a moment as we're preparing our hearts to get ready for Holy Week. Father we thank you for Your word which we've heard this morning. We thank you that Your power is beyond anything that we can comprehend, that Your compassion is everything that we would ever look for in a friend. Father we thank you for the great gift of Your Son Jesus. For not merely telling us that You love us but for demonstrating it by offering up His life in a most horrific fashion. Forgive our apathy, our indifference, our failure to really look at what He's done. Fix our attention upon the cross in the days ahead. Open our hearts and crack them with your love that we might respond to You as we should by loving You with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. And sincerely loving our neighbor as ourselves. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen