

Day 38– Friday 23 March

Scripture for Prayer

Stilling: Take a few minutes to become still.

God is Present: God is with you. Ask God to inspire your imagination.

Ask for what you desire. What gift, what grace do you want right now?

Read the passage through.

Identify with a character: Choose one of the people in the story and imagine the scene from their point of view.

Set the Scene: Fill in the details to make the story real for you. Imagine the scenery, the weather, the people. Be aware of how you feel.

John 11:1-27 (NRSVA)

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having 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.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' 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. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

27 She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

Conversation: When you come towards the end of your time of prayer, talk to Jesus, or Martha about what has come up for you. Imagine how they might reply.

Prayer: End with a formal prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer/Our Father

Review of Prayer

Notice how you reacted and felt.

Is this saying anything about you, about the way you see others or God?

Did anything surprise you?

Is there anything you need to pray about in future?

Today's Meditation

Christianity sees each person as capable of being led away from God. Traditionally we have felt there is a force for evil that leads to death. We have personalised this force and given it various names such as the Devil, Satan; St Ignatius of Loyola called it, 'the enemy of our human nature'.

We always need to be on our guard to ensure that we don't fall into the temptation of not using our gifts well. Some people are tempted to feel useless and worthless; Tempted to feel that there is no remedy, nothing can be done to change things. Others are tempted to cover their own inadequacies by seeking money, power and trying to dominate others. In today's meditation consider what brings you down and robs you of life. For some people it's the anger that bubbles under the surface and then explodes unexpectedly at some poor unfortunate.

For others it may be a sense of worthlessness which prevents them from doing good and using their talents to help others. Some live a shallow, self-centred life and rarely think of the deeper things of life. Others seek the latest electronic gadget, money, power over others, or desire all to look up to them.

We all have weak spots. If we identify them, then we can ask for God's grace to overcome them.

What are your weak spots?

Looking at your life now, what changes could you make to help you better flourish?

Pray to the Lord for the gift, the grace you need to live a more fulfilling life.

Ask for what you desire.

Talk to God in your own words - listen to how you imagine God might reply to you.