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Fifth Sunday Lent A-RCIA  
March 18, 2018

Take a moment and think of the best teacher that you ever had in school. What were some of the qualities that made you like this teacher? Were they kind and generous to you? Did they help you out when you were struggling with your homework? Did they make the lectures interesting so that school didn't seem so boring? A teacher like this stands out in our memory because they had a special way to help us to learn. They challenged us, made us feel smart, helped us to comprehend and understand. They made us feel good about ourselves and what we learned. As we reflect on those teachers who have made an impact on our lives, perhaps today we can reflect on the greatest teacher of all: Jesus Christ. He taught by word and by example and today He teaches us through the life and death of Lazarus.

Normally when we hear that someone is sick and very ill and perhaps even dying, we want to go to see them right away. Instead of leaving immediately, Jesus waited. By the time that Jesus does go, we find out that Lazarus has been dead for four days. This is when we begin to learn that Jesus is teaching us something important. Jesus says: "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God." We see in these words, the promise of new life.

Yet, even with Jesus teaching us this, we have doubts about what we are learning. Perhaps it's hard to comprehend. Martha say 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.” Sometimes it is difficult to believe, to trust in the promise of eternal life. This is why we must continue to learn from the best teacher of all. When someone we have loved dies, we miss them, we don’t want them leave us, we want them to be here by our side. Jesus teaches us that our love does not end with death, but can continue on because of the Resurrection. He reassures Martha: “Your brother will rise.” As He says this, Jesus has one final lesson to teach us. He goes to the tomb and cries out to the dead man: “Lazarus, come out!” We become witnesses to the Resurrection.

We come here this morning for one final scrutiny for our Catechumens and Candidates. As we do so, I ask all of you who are gathered here to continue your prayers for each one of them during these next two weeks. This Gospel about Lazarus reminds them of the new life that they are hoping for: A new life of faith, a new life filled with hope. To our Catechumens and Candidates, I especially want you to think about today all the Catechumens and Candidates that have come before you, all the generations that have been inspired by the Gospel we just heard. It is a great story of faith which we can pass on to the next generation and will inspire many generations to come.

We realize that we all have many lessons to learn so that we may continue to grow in our faith. In fact, we should remember that we should never stop learning from Jesus. May we all be inspired by the life and death of Lazarus and his Resurrection, to place our faith, our trust, completely in the Lord.