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Today's scripture reading  
Fifth Sunday of Lent Year A (March 22, 2026)

chief priest Father Hiroshi Konishi

First reading: Ezekiel 37:12-14

Second reading: Romans 8:8-11

Gospel reading: John 11:1-45

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## Resurrection and Revival

In today's Gospel, Lazarus "rises" from the tomb. He comes back to life. Jesus "rises" from the tomb three days after his death. Are "risen" and "resurrection" truly the same thing?

"Yomigaeri" is a noun derived from the conjunctive form of the verb "yomigaeru" (to revive). "Yomigaeru" originally meant "to return from the underworld." From this, the meanings arose: ① A dead person or a dying person comes back to life; to come back to life; to be revived. ② Something that has declined becomes strong again (Sanseido, Daijirin 3rd Edition). Lazarus rose from the dead. It means he came back to life. What did Lazarus do after he came back to life? He probably spent time with his sisters Mary and Martha. However, I think his lifespan eventually came to an end and he died.

However, Jesus' "resurrection" is different. God the Father raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus became eternally alive. Jesus' death and resurrection demonstrate that life is not limited by death. In today's Gospel, Jesus was trying to make the sisters who were weeping over the death of their brothers realize that life does not end with death, and to teach them that there is hope for eternal life.

Many people will be baptized this Easter. Baptism is the beginning of living a new life as a child of God. Candidates die with Jesus to their old lives and begin to live a new life with the resurrected Jesus who rose from the dead.

In the Gospel of John, the miraculous works performed by Jesus are called "signs." The story of Lazarus's resurrection, found in today's recording, is the last of these "signs." Let's pay attention to the words and savor them.

#### Section 1: Bethany

The name "Bethany" appears several times in the Gospel of John. "This took place in Bethany, on the other side of the Jordan where John was baptizing people" (John 1:28, Franciscan translation). This Bethany is not the same Bethany where Mary and Martha lived. The "Bethany" mentioned in today's reading is a village located about 3 kilometers southeast of Jerusalem. Verse 18 says, "Bethany was near Jerusalem, about 15 stadia." One stadia is approximately 185 meters.

#### Verse 24: The time of resurrection in the last days

The idea of the resurrection of the dead seems to have been a relatively recent concept. In Jesus' time, with the exception of the Sadducees, most Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead.

#### Verse 33: Feeling indignant and excited

The Franciscan translation renders it as, "He was filled with indignation in his heart, and his heart was broken." The Iwanami publishing translation renders it as, "He was filled with indignation in the depths of his heart, and he was disturbed." A literal translation would be, "He was indignant in his spirit." This apparently means that anger or emotion is expressed through the tone of voice. It can also mean to give a stern command. The word "excited" is used in chapter 12, verse 27, as well as in chapters 13, verse 21, 14, verse 1, and verse 27. It may be a word that expresses Jesus' feelings as he approached his death on the cross.

#### Verse 39: Lord, it has been four days, so it smells.

In the Palestine region, funerals were held on the day of death (e.g., Acts 5 : 5-6 , 10 ). Jews believed that the soul of the dead lingered around the body for three days after death, but departed on the fourth day. Therefore, once the body began to decompose noticeably around the fourth day after death, it was believed that the dead would no longer rise.