



**Parish Church of
St Michael and All Angels
Sunday 29th March 2020
5th Sunday of Lent**



Readings

Romans 8.6-11
John 11.1-45

**A prayer for all those affected by
coronavirus**

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us
from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen

**Any queries please contact the
Churchwardens**

Colin Keam 01928 576293

or

Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

or the

Church Mobile

Bookings for baptisms and weddings

Tel: 07722470940 and speak to

Robbie

Church website

www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk

Facebook

**Saint Michael and All Angels
Church, Runcorn**

**Reflection for notice sheet
29 March 2020**

This week's gospel reading is so encouraging. At this time, when we face the prospect of many premature deaths during the coronavirus pandemic, we need to hear the words of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus did not deny the reality of death. Death is real, and he wept with Mary who had lost her beloved brother. But the raising of Lazarus from the dead was a foretaste of Jesus' ultimate victory over death. He was crucified on Good Friday, and raised to life on Easter Day. As Christians we know that grief is real but so is the promise of eternal life through Jesus. That is our certain hope.

The first reading mentions life several times. This is not just life after death, but life here and now. The apostle Paul says that the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in us (verse 11). He helps us to think about things that please God. Paul challenges us to let the Holy Spirit control our minds, bringing us life and peace.

Today, let's thank Jesus that he has conquered death. Thank him for his gift of new life, now and for eternity. Continue to pray that coronavirus would be beaten. Pray for those near to death, and those grieving.

Readings

Romans 8: 6-11

⁶ So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. ⁷ For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸ That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. ⁹ But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) ¹⁰ And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. ¹¹ The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

John 11: 1-45

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. ² This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. ³ So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick." ⁴ But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from

this." ⁵ So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, ⁶ he stayed where he was for the next two days. ⁷ Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." ⁸ But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?" ⁹ Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. ¹⁰ But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." ¹¹ Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up." ¹² The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" ¹³ They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. ¹⁴ So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him." ¹⁶ Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus." ¹⁷ When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. ²⁰ When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask." ²³ Jesus told her, "Your brother

will rise again." ²⁴ "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day." ²⁵ Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. ²⁶ Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?" ²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God" ²⁸ Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." ²⁹ So Mary immediately went to him. ³⁰ Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. ³¹ When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there. ³² When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. ³⁴ "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Then Jesus wept. ³⁶ The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" ³⁷ But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?" ³⁸ Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. ³⁹ "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible." ⁴⁰ Jesus respond-

ed, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" ⁴¹ So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. ⁴² You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." ⁴³ Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in grave clothes, his face wrapped in a head cloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!" ⁴⁵ Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen.