

Monday Quotes



Grain

“I’m not saying that God causes suffering to teach us good things. But God does use everything, and if God wanted us to experience global solidarity, I can’t think of a better way. We all have access to this suffering, and it bypasses race, gender, religion, and nation.” –Father Richard Rohr

Submitted by Reverend Diane House, Cumberland, WI

Field

21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ... When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the religious leaders who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34 He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus began to weep... 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." John 11:32-25; 34; & 41-44

Thoughts

How extraordinary the world has become, and yet how relatable the Word of God is to our journeys. Which church leaders have taken Preaching During a Pandemic 101? But when I listen to many online, whether with sophisticated tech or bouncing images, their messages addressing our current context with the hope of God at the center seem natural and familiar. Bishop Gerald Mansholt of the East Central Synod in a recent address said, “For these days we have been baptized.”

We have not been prepared for a pandemic but in certain ways have always been. Jesus’ gift of new life is ageless. That doesn’t mean I am at ease all the time. Who is? I even had trouble focusing on this reflection at first. But Martha and Mary also had scattered thoughts, struggling with their particular challenge losing their brother, Lazarus. Jesus’ presence helped them and their community to center their minds and spirits, as God does for us.

Jesus brought Lazarus back, but not to business as usual. He and the community experienced new life. The text invites us to reflect on our own glimpses of resurrection during this time. We want to get back to normal but what might be new? How do our hurdles and concerns bring us into deeper solidarity with the suffering of others? How does our own vulnerability call us to resist racist language and uncaringness various leaders express toward some of our neighbors?

May God’s presence be centering and give us glimpses of newness. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy