



Clincarthill Parish Church – Reflections for Lent #2 – Week beginning Sunday 18th February 2024



Bible Passage – John 11: 45-55 (NIV UK)

Therefore, many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen Jesus bring Lazarus back from the dead, believed in him.

But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

“What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.”

Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So, from that day on, they plotted to take his life.

John chooses to lead up to his account of Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and the last week of his life by telling two stories about events at Bethany. Bethany was a small town on the Mount of Olives, about 2 miles from Jerusalem. Mary and Martha, sisters who lived in Bethany, are mentioned in Luke’s Gospel as well as John’s. John tells us that they had a brother named Lazarus. Lazarus died, but 4 days later Jesus came to Bethany and brought him back to life. It seems that the family was well-connected, so mourners had gathered at their house from all round the area including Jerusalem itself. Jesus’ miracle was therefore witnessed by a lot of people. John tells us that many of them believed in Jesus though some continued to have doubts about him.

Some Questions for Reflection

- *Why do you think the Jewish authorities (Pharisees, chief priests, Sanhedrin) felt so threatened by Jesus and his actions?*
 - *According to John, who are “the people” Jesus died for?*
- *Before bringing Lazarus back to life, Jesus told Lazarus’s sister, Martha, “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” What do you think he meant by that?*
 - *What do the death and resurrection of Jesus mean for you?*

Prayer

Lord Jesus, grant me faith to believe that you are the Resurrection and the Life, just as you claimed. Just as you were raised to new life after you died, hold out to me the hope of new life after death. May this be a strength and comfort to me in all the uncertainties, troubles and trials I face this week. Amen.