

SUNDAY PLUS

I believe...

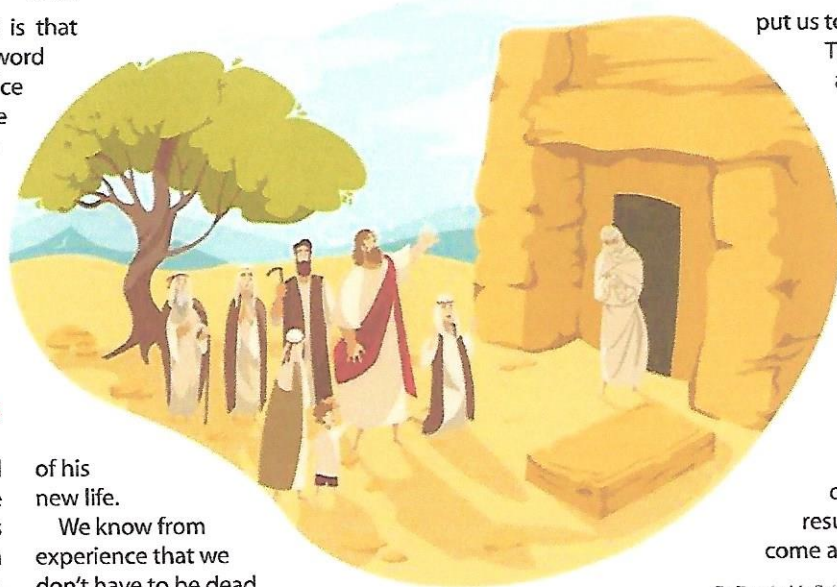
Raising the dead

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

The great miracle in today's Gospel is that while he is dead Lazarus hears the word of Jesus and obeys it. Hearing the voice of the Son of God, Lazarus lives again. The great prophetic word of Jesus is seen to happen:

I tell you most solemnly, the hour will come – in fact it is here already – when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and all who hear it will live.

John 5:25



When Lazarus comes forth, he is still wearing the clothes of a dead man. He is still enshrouded. Jesus now addresses the community: "Unbind him, let him go free." In obeying the word of Jesus, the community plays its part in helping Lazarus unwind and emerge into the light

of his new life.

We know from experience that we don't have to be dead physically to be in need of being raised up. We can be dead in the midst of life – hoping for a word and a community that will

put us together again.

The voice of Jesus calls us all away from making the tomb our natural habitat.

It also challenges us to take responsibility for our brother or sister who, like Lazarus, is loved by Jesus. If we see someone buried alive we are invited to do as Jesus and the community do in the Gospel: call them and help them go free. If we do that as part of our Lenten task, then resurrection at Easter won't come as too much of a surprise.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk.



Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Give eternal rest to the people whom I've known and loved and who have gone home to you. ☩ Amen.

We all need someone to believe in us

By Lucy Russell

Mr Smith taught me History from the age of 12 to 16. During that time, he told me weekly that I was the brightest pupil he had ever taught and that I was going to get an A for GCSE History. So, I did. Then I took History at 'A' level and studied it for a degree. Now I teach History and I endeavour to empower my students with the belief that they can

achieve their dreams and God-given potential. We all need someone to believe in us. Look at the exchange between Martha and Jesus: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died... whatever you ask of God, God will give You." Jesus' response is: "Your brother will rise again." Martha's belief in Jesus is what makes the difference here; he responds to her faith by performing the miracle that will set him on the road to accomplishing God's plan for him.

Dr Lucy Russell is the author of *Who Do You Say You Are?*, available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

Feast of the week Friday 30 March St Osburga

St Osburg's church in Coventry is the world's only church dedicated to a virtually unknown nun, Osburga. She was, perhaps, the first abbess of a seventh- or eighth-century abbey, possibly built on the site of the modern church. Her tomb within Coventry's oldest church became an important pilgrimage destination.

In 1016 King Canute raided and destroyed the convent, apparently rebuilding it following his conversion to Christianity. In 1043, Earl Leofric and his famous wife, the Lady Godiva,

restored and converted it into a monastery for a community of monks.

St Osburga's shrine continued to attract pilgrims and so, in 1431, her relics were moved to St Mary's priory and cathedral. In 1539, Henry VIII's commissioners dissolved the priory and because the local people couldn't raise enough money to buy the cathedral, demolished it, wrecking the shrine and relics. It was the only cathedral to be destroyed during the Reformation in England.

St Osburg's is, today, still known as the mother church of Coventry.

NB: The nun was Osburga. The church is Osburg.

You, witnesses of Jesus, pass on the witness that Jesus is alive and this will give us hope, it will give hope to this world, which has aged somewhat, because of wars, because of evil and because of sin. Press on, young people!

Pope Francis

Today: Ezekiel 37:12-14 Romans 8:8-11 John 11:1-45

Monday: Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 John 8:1-11

Tuesday: Numbers 21:4-9 John 8:21-30

Wednesday: Daniel 3:14-20, 24-25, 28 John 8:31-42

Thursday: Genesis 17:3-9 John 8:51-59

Friday: Jeremiah 20:10-13 John 10:31-42

Saturday: Ezekiel 37:21-28 John 11:45-56

Next Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-7 Philippians 2:6-11 Matthew 26:14-27:66