

Proper 5

(Sunday between 5 and 11 June inclusive, if after Trinity Sunday) • Ordinary Time, Week 10

Principal Service readings

1 Kings 17.17-24	The widow of Zarephath's son raised to life
Psalms 30	Thanksgiving for God's help and healing
Galatians 1.11-24	Paul's response to God's call
Luke 7.11-17	The widow of Nain's son restored to life

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
speak to our hearts in the stillness,
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

Gospel Reading

The widow of Nain's son restored to life

"Soon afterwards Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favourably on his people!' ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

Luke 7.11-17 NRSV¹

¹ *New Revised Standard Version Bible* is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Comments and Questions

Luke gives some background information about the incident in Nain, a town in the Galilee region. What are the implications of the dead man being an only son and his mother being a widow?

Jesus' words and actions convey something about God's intentions for the world. What conclusions can we draw from his actions here, if any?

There are several similarities between Luke's story and the one in the Old Testament reading (1 Kings 17.17-24), about Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. Do you think Luke was trying to emphasise the similarities, and if so why?

The raising of the dead man to life is a marvellous demonstration of God's power and compassion, and yet the people are seized with fear. Is this natural and right? How should we regard a God who can do such things?

The people begin to recognise Jesus as a great prophet. Following on from this story is one in which disciples of John the Baptist are sent by him to ask Jesus: 'Who are you?' What reply might they give from this event?

When a person falls ill or gets injured, or suffers in some way, one reflection is to think that they deserved it in some way, that it is punishment for their bad behaviour, attitude, secret sins or whatever. How have you responded to such situations?

Quotations

1

Stronger than all the evils in the soul is the Word, and the healing power that dwells in him.

Origen c.185–c.254

2

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as if everything is.

Albert Einstein 1879–1955

2

3

The risen Lord renews this mission ('In my name ... they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover') and confirms it through the signs that the Church performs by invoking his name. These signs demonstrate in a special way that Jesus is truly 'the God who saves'.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, § 1507

Related topics

For further study:

Justice; Christology; God's mercy, forgiveness and compassion; Grace

Closing Prayer

O God,
our very breath, our only hope,
in every age you take pity on us
and bring forth life from death.

Visit your people
and raise your Church to new life,
that we may join with all generations
in voicing our wonder and praise.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Collect for the Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C²

CPL • LBC Year C Proper 05.odt • 2020-04-07

² *Opening Prayers : Scripture-related Collects for years A, B and C from The Sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1997.*

3