

XVI Trinity 2020  
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish  
Father Craig Looney  
*St. Luke 7.11-17*



Jesus said he is the resurrection and the life...and those who believe in him will live even though they die; and those who live and believe in him will never die. It is the promise of Christianity all those who believe in Jesus Christ will one day be raised from the dead.

The promise of Christianity is that all believers will one day be raised from the dead...into eternal life.

The Bible...Old Testament and New Testament...contains 10 accounts of people being raised from the dead...

...Both Elijah and his successor, Elisha, restored life to the bodies of young boys who suddenly and unexpectedly died. They gave the boys back into the arms of their mothers. (I Kings 17; II Kings 4)

...During the funeral procession of a young man being taken to his grave, the dead man revived when his body touched Elisha's bones. (II Kings 13)

...Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus, an important leader in the Synagogue at Capernaum, back to life when she got sick and died. (Mark 5; Matthew 9; Luke 8)

...Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after he had been in the grave four days and gave him back to his sister Martha. (John 11)

...Many Saints in Jerusalem were raised from the dead after Jesus' resurrection and appeared to many people. (Matthew 27)

...Saint Peter raised a young woman named Tabitha, who was famous for making beautiful clothes and helping the poor, when she died. (Acts 9)

...Saint Paul restored the life of a young boy named Eutychus, who fell from a window during the Apostle's long sermon. (Acts 20) Perhaps there is a reason sermons at Saint Joseph Parish are short!

In today's Gospel, Jesus and his disciples set out from their base of operations in Capernaum and head south through Galilee. They pass through the small village a Nain, where they encounter the funeral procession for a widow's only son. Jesus tells the boy to get up...and he does...and gives him back to his mother. Her life too is made whole again.

All of the accounts in the Bible of people being raised from the dead prove God the Father has the power to bring people back to life. They are resurrection miracles but not the same as the resurrection of Jesus, or our own resurrections...those people died again. Jesus' resurrection is permanent and forever, as ours will be. Jesus took his resurrected body back to heaven with him. We will get new bodies like his...which will never die!

The Burial Office from the *Book of Common Prayer* begins with the same words Jesus spoke to Martha..."I am the resurrection and the life." They set the tone for the Requiem Mass which follows...it's not about how much we will miss the person or what they meant to us...true as that may be. It's about what Saint Paul says we know...the truth about those who have died so we won't be sad like those who have no hope.

The Gospels teach us Jesus is in the business of putting shattered lives back together no matter how hopeless things look. Jesus takes the overwhelming grief and sorrow we feel when someone we love dies...and transforms it into unspeakable joy!

We believe Jesus is the resurrection and the life...because we are people of hope!

