

## Lazarus - Arise!

Read the Story of Lazarus in John 11

- It's extremely significant that the Church places Lazarus Saturday exactly one week earlier than the Resurrection of Christ.
- The miracle teaches us the power of God over death, so that we may learn to truly believe and have our faith transformed at Pascha.
- Just as we begin Holy Week, we get a glimpse and foretaste of the way God will save the world from the corruption of sin, from sickness and pain.
- As Christ said, Lazarus was merely sleeping. Although death had claimed him for four days in the tomb, and he smelled from the corruption of his body, he will live again.
- Our view of death as sleeping in anticipation of what's to come.
- This is the joyful sorrow of what we are about to experience in Holy Week.
- We mourn, all the while expecting the greatest of all miracles!
- Lazarus is also one of the most convincing examples used to explain the respect, honor, and sanctity of the physical body in the Orthodox faith as we fully believe in the Resurrection of the BODY and the SOUL for eternal life.
- Although it remains a mystery, and we will not be in need of food as we'll be more like angels, we will indeed have our physical bodies.
  - Thus says the Lord to these bones: "Behold, I will bring the Spirit of Life upon you" Ezekiel 37:5.
- Lastly, remember: Lazarus is each one of us.
- Each and every time we attend a funeral or place a loved one in the grave, we should remember this very real example as a foretaste of our own earthly death.

Questions:

- How does God feel about each one of us?
  - He loves us and knows us.
- Does He weep for us as He wept for Lazarus?
  - Yes, when we are sad or make bad choices
- Is He a loving God that desires us to be with Him?
  - Yes, He loves us very much!
- Why has He allowed Lazarus to die?
  - We find the answer in the words of Christ to His Father, which are for our benefit. He says, **"So that they may believe."**
  - Christ attends the funeral to join the people in their sadness, to display His own mourning over all of humanity's fallen and deteriorated state, and to transform the event into a celebration of life!

***He turns our tears of sadness into tears of joy!***

### **Lazarus Troparia**

O Christ God, when You raised Lazarus from the dead before the time of Your passion, you confirmed the future resurrection of all. We too like the children of old carry before you the symbols of victory. And cry out to you O conqueror of death, "Hosanna in the Highest, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."

What are the symbols of victory? ---Palms! That is why we carry palms on Palm Sunday—Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead!