

CARING FOR OTHERS

The four gospels are full of stories describing how Jesus reached out to those who were suffering. Time after time, we read about how he healed the blind, the sick, the paralysed, lepers etc. Two occasions are recorded in which Jesus brought people back to life.

His compassion and care are an example to us today. The message to us is clear- we should always look for opportunities to care for people suffering and try to relieve their discomfort and pain.



THE
GOD
WHO
SPEAKS

WORD OF THE WEEK

John 11: 1-44



There was a man named Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister, Martha, and he was ill. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will not end in death, but it is for God's glory so that through it the Son of God may be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that he was ill he stayed where he was for two more days. Eventually, on arriving Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died, but even now I know that God will grant whatever you ask him.'

Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

When Mary went to Jesus she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who had come with her, Jesus was greatly distressed, and with a profound sigh he said, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' Sighing again, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day since he died.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?'

So they took the stone away.

Then Jesus cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with strips of material, and a cloth over his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

This week's word of the week sees a family reacting to the death of their loved one: Lazarus. Jesus, instead of showing up when Lazarus had just passed away, showed up four days later. Mary, Lazarus' sister tells Jesus that if he had shown up earlier, Lazarus would not have died. What an accusation! But instead of reacting in anger to Mary's unbelief and lack of trust Jesus responded with tears. Deeply moved by his friend's pain (even though he knows he will raise Lazarus in only a few minutes) he cries tears of sadness and grief along with Mary. Why? The simple answer is that Jesus was moved by compassion.



PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Lord, please open my eyes. Please let me see those around me that are in need of my compassion. Compel me to listen to them, to hear their needs. Give me the heart to be interested in their troubles and show me the ways I can help. I want to be compassionate. I want to be like you that had so much compassion for the world that you sacrificed your Son on a cross for us. Help me to set a good example for those around me so that we can all work together to make the world a more kind, generous and caring place.

We ask this and all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



"Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you."

Mother Teresa



Can you name any other stories from the bible that teach us about caring for others?

Talk to the person next to you and discuss ones that you can remember and what you think they teach us about caring for others.



The Good Samaritan

In the parable of the Good Samaritan we hear of a man helping someone who has been beaten by robbers. The man who helps is from Samaria and Jews and Samaritans didn't always get on. But this didn't stop the Samaritan helping the Jewish man who had been beaten. He didn't know who he was either but he still helped. Read the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25–27) and discuss and reflect on the following questions.

Can you love someone you don't know?
Who is my neighbour?

How well do you know your physical neighbours?
When did you last show love to your neighbour?

Am I responsible for the well-being of people I don't even know?
Does the way you love your neighbour affect your school/local community/the world?

Today, what stops me from loving my neighbour?