

## International Conversation Cafe

Community Group:                      Who is Jesus Christ?

One of the ways we know someone loves us is that they understand how we feel. Perhaps they listen quietly or look us in the eye. They do not scold us or tell us to not feel that way. Jesus understood others and felt their sorrow as his own. John recorded an event about Jesus and his friends, Mary and Martha. Lazarus, their brother had died and the sisters were disappointed that Jesus hadn't healed him. As you read the passage, note Jesus' emotions and plan.

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "I wish you had been here! Then my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you anything you ask for."

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

Martha answered, "I know he will rise again. This will happen when people are raised from the dead on the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I believe that you are the Christ (promised one), the Son of God (one who completely demonstrated who God is). I believe that you are the One who was supposed to come into the world."

Mary reached the place where Jesus was. When she saw him, she fell at his feet. She said, "Lord, I wish you had been here! Then my brother would not have died."

Jesus saw her crying. He saw that the Jews who had come along with her were crying also. His spirit became very sad, and he was troubled.

"Where have you put him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus sobbed.

Then the Jews said, "See how much he loved him!"

But some of them said, "He opened the eyes of the blind man. Couldn't he have kept this man from dying?"

*Name the main characters in the story. Why were Mary and Martha upset with Jesus?*

*Why do you think Jesus wept? How do you think Jesus feels when you suffer a loss?*

*What promise did Jesus give Mary and Martha? What do you think it means?*

Once more Jesus felt very sad. He came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone in front of the entrance.

“Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad smell. Lazarus has been in the tomb for four days.”

Then Jesus said, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see God’s **glory**?”

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up. He said, “Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me. But I said this for the benefit of the people standing here. I said it so they will believe that you sent me.”

Then Jesus called in a loud voice. He said, “Lazarus, come out!”

The dead man came out. His hands and feet were wrapped with strips of **linen**. A cloth was around his face.



Gogh, Vincent van. The Raising of Lazarus (after Rembrandt.) May, 1890. Saint-Remy. Oil on canvas. 49x63 cm. Rijksmuseum. Vincent Van Gogh, Amsterdam

Resurrection is when the soul and spirit of a person who has died, is reunited to his own body, not another body. Lazarus is an example of resurrection. How is this different from reincarnation?

*Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. What does this tell us about Jesus?*

*Jesus did not heal Lazarus when he was sick, but he did raise him from the dead. What does this story teach us about Jesus and his compassion and his plan?*

*What would you like to remember from this event?*