

## MARCH 22 2026 FATHER PETER TURRONE

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”

This is the question that Jesus asks Martha after the death of her brother, in the midst of her anguish. Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

Where does the idea of the resurrection come from? After all, as Christians, this is part of our creed. We believe that Jesus died and He rose from the dead, He resurrected from the dead. We believe that at His second coming, that we too will rise from the dead, so we will experience a glorified body.

So, what happens? How does—where did this come from? Well, God revealed this to us already in the Hebrew Bible, in the Old Testament. We can see that even in the first reading that was proclaimed earlier from the Prophet Ezekiel. The Lord provides this vision. He says, “I’m going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O My people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.”

We know the Lord is speaking of the time that will come in the future, when body and soul again will be reunited and we will be fully alive in God. Those that will be with the Lord, we pray all of us, again, glorified to be able to be with Him and Mary as she is body and soul in Heaven.

So, this idea repeats itself in the Old Testament, so the Jewish people already had this understanding. So, when Jesus rises from the dead, they knew that this was going to happen until the end of time, but in the middle of history—of salvation history.

So, Martha, she herself understands this. She goes, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” So she, later on, will be overwhelmed with joy when she's able to see Jesus and the resurrection.

These words are incredibly powerful because all of us—all of us—have had loved ones that have died, and we know how incredibly painful that is. The most difficult thing I so far in my life and as a priest, but also in my life in these few decades, was being next to a little boy as he passed from this world to the next, and to be there with the presence of his parents.

The most agonizing thing as a priest, I can't even imagine to begin what it was like for his parents. And the only thing—there are no words except Christ's words that can give us the strength to endure the agony of death. And His words are:

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.”

So, that physical death that came because of the sin of Adam and Eve, original sin, damaged everything and it brought death into the world. Physical death. But the Lord promised us, He says, “Even though He is going to face it,” and we hear in the suffering that He Himself experiences, He's weeping over the death of this friend. He's weeping at seeing what sin had caused—original sin. Jesus also has in mind that He's facing death, that He Himself is going to His death.

This is the last miracle before He is brought to His passion. So with all of us, Jesus is carrying all of this, and He faces death straight in the face, and He provides with His grace, right, this miracle, so for Lazarus, who is going to die physically afterwards. But the Lord does this, again, to remind us that He is Lord of everything, and that even though we have

to face death, death does not have the final say, as we say in the (unclear) that's used for many funerals.

So, the Lord shows us. He says, “Look, this time, these three days, this fourth day that Lazarus was dead, and he rose from the dead.” Well, the Lord is saying, “Look, this is going to happen to Me.” Because Jesus, when He dies, He's going to be buried, He's going to be in the tomb for three days, but He is going to rise again.

And this is, again, the joy for all of us as Christians, for those who believe, because we know that when the soul leaves the body, the soul goes immediately to Jesus and receives its judgment. And we know this. We have one life and that's why we always pray for the dead, because we want them to be with the Lord in Heaven. If they're being purified, we ask God for this grace. We hope that all of them, all of our loved ones, are already with the Lord that have passed before us.

But we also know that one day, when Jesus comes back, we're not going to be just spirits. We're going to be resurrected in the flesh like He is. And that means that we'll be able to see Jesus, we'll be able to be hugged by Him and hug Him, but we'll also be able to hug and embrace those that we love and those that have died and that are interceding before the throne of God.

So, for all of us who have lost loved ones, may these words provide a deep sense of consolation and hope, because Christ rose from the dead, and we have every reason for hope and every reason for joy that awaits us in the future—but not without passing through the Crucible of Suffering beforehand.