

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Hear the Word of the Lord, the Word of Christ, the Word of the only True God, the Word of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity; the Word of God Enfleshed, the Word of the Lord of Life: “Your brother will rise again.” The Lord spoke these Words of promise, the Words of hope, these Words of comfort, to grieving Martha. He spoke them four days after Lazarus had been placed in the tomb.

They seemed to be impossible Words, Words completely out of touch with the earthly reality that Lazarus had become gravely ill and died. But when He heard of Lazarus’ great sickness, the Lord proclaimed, “This sickness will not end in death...” and yet now was Lazarus dead and buried. It looked to fallen men as if the Lord were simply wrong.

But the eyes with which men see are fallen eyes. The reason earthly men employ is twisted and perverse. All men born of human father, all men descended from the first man, are born in sin. And to that sin, inherited sin, do all men daily add. The same has been true of you. So death comes to all men, inasmuch as all have sinned. Lazarus simply went the way of all flesh. And so too did our beloved brother Michael. Michael too was a sinner. He was the first to admit it. But his death was not the result of a specific sin. He died as all men do.

It is true that God’s Word seems impossible, even foolish to sinful men, to perishing men. Fallen men mock and ridicule the true God and His Word. But the same Lord Himself spoke through the Prophet Isaiah and said “...My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways... As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” So it was that at the report of Lazarus’ death, the Christ made the disciples a promise: “Our friend Lazarus is asleep, I am going there to wake him up.”

Martha was grieving. She lost her brother. You know what that means. Especially this day, you know how that feels. It is hard to lose someone you love. Today you know that loss, that hurt, that empty place where someone you loved once was. You too know the grief Martha knew, the grief all fallen men experience. It hurts. It hurts that Michael has been taken from us. It hurts to lose a husband, a father, a friend. It hurts that the end seemed to come so quickly. So this day there are tears, and rightly so, for the loss is real.

But do not be deceived by what earthly eyes see or what fallen reason imagines. Trust rather in the Word of God. Trust in the Word of the Lord who Himself went the Way of the cross and tomb, the Lord who Himself died in the darkness of Golgotha. For that Lord, the only True God, spoke Words of promise for you: “Your brother will rise again.” Michael will rise again.

Michael believed in Jesus Christ. He believed that in Christ, God took on Flesh and was made Man. He believed that Christ, who was without sin, suffered and died for all his sins, and for the sins of all men of all time. And Michael believed that on the third day the Lord Christ, his Lord, rose again from the dead, emptying the tomb, defeating death.

So according to the Lord’s Promise, although we lay his earthly remains in God’s acre this day, Michael is not dead. Like Lazarus, he sleeps. He fell asleep in faith. So the Apostle Paul’s

Words of comfort to the Thessalonians are Words for you. He wants you to know the truth concerning those who have fallen asleep in Christ. For you who believe in Jesus do not sorrow as do others who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, just as Michael believed. So also, then, according to the Promise of God, will the Lord bring with Him Michael, and all those who sleep in Jesus.

Michael is not dead. He lives. His soul lives, now, with His Lord in heaven. Hear then the Word of the Lord's Promise to you through His Apostle: ...the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Michael will rise first. Now his body sleeps awaiting that glorious call. Now his soul is with the God that will call him forth.

Michael is in heaven. But we remain. We remain here, in this vale of tears, in difficulty and tribulation. But God has a Word for you through the Prophet Jeremiah: "It is good that one should hope, and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord."

Here the Lord feeds and comforts His Flock, keeping you who believe in Him safe until the day He comes again. That He does through the forgiveness of your sins. That He does by granting you faith, for it is by grace you are saved through faith, faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord of Life.

Those of you who knew Michael know that he had a favorite response to tribulation. Faced with difficulty, Michael would say "It'll be all right." Even in the face of death, Michael said "It'll be all right." Michael was right. It is "all right". It is "all right" because he is with God forever. He has received the reward of faith. Michael is in heaven, free from suffering, free from tears, free from adversity. He knows only joy and bliss, happiness and felicity. He sees the face of God.

Let that be your comfort this day, Margaret. Mike, Cindy, Mary, family and friends of Michael, look to Christ. There, in Him, in Him alone, there is comfort and consolation, hope and strength and salvation. He died for you. He rose for you. He desires that you put your trust in Him. He bids all men believe in Him, that they too be raised to eternal joy on the Last Day.

And this day that risen and ascended Lord, the Lord of heaven and earth, joins heaven and earth in Holy Communion. As you kneel at this altar, He places His Body with Bread, and it is placed into your mouth. He places His Blood with wine, and it is streamed across your lips. You eat His Body and drink His Blood, and you are made one with the Holy Church on earth, one with the Church in Glory in heaven, one with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, one with Michael as you kneel and are joined in Communion with Christ.

On the Last Day the Lord who called Lazarus out of death to life will call Michael forth, and he will stand, risen, alive, before the Lord who emptied His tomb and rose from the dead to defeat sin and death. This body, the body we lay to rest this day, this body for which Christ died and rose, this body will be transformed into a heavenly body and united with his soul, and Michael will be carried into heaven in the glorious gleaming celestial train of the Lord, together with the Holy Church made perfect.

St. John 11:21-27
Requiem Mass, ✠ Michael Bruce Quinkert ✠ 2/21/1941 – 5/17/2018
May 22, 2018 A. ✠ D.

Jesus said to Martha “I AM the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me, though He may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”

May he ✠ rest in peace.

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