

Weekly Gospel Readings
4th Sunday of Paope
Jesus Raises the Widow's Son

This Sunday (11/05/2023), the 4th Sunday of the blessed month of Paope, the Church Gospel reading is from **Luke 7: 11-17**. In this passage, our Lord is met at the gates of the town by a funeral procession. The grief of the widowed mother of the young man who had died arouses His compassion and tells her “Do not weep” (**Luke 7:13**). Jesus then went and touched the open coffin and said “Young man, I say to you, arise” (**Luke 7:14**). When He touched the coffin, His power immediately dispelled the presence of death. The dead man sat up and began to speak and all those who were witnessing this glorified God.

In all previous miracles, the Lord was invited, but in this incident, no one summoned Him to restore the dead man to life, He just happened to be in the procession's path. Was it a coincidence? Obviously, the Lord purposely made this miracle to remind us of the authority of the Son of God and His powerful and miraculous words & touch. “Then He came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise.’” (**Luke 7:14**).

This makes us question why His Word was not enough to raise the dead man. St. Cyril of Alexandria reminds us that these actions were intended for us to understand that the Holy Body of Christ is essential for the salvation of man. “What is more powerful than the Word of God? Why then did He not affect the miracle by a word only, but also touched the bier? It was, my beloved, that thou mightiest learn that the holy body of Christ is effectual for the salvation of man. For the flesh of the Almighty Word is the body of life and was clothed with His might. The flesh of Christ also has to power of giving life and annihilates the influence of death and corruption because it is the flesh of the Word, who gives life to all.” **SERMON XXXVI-135**

Let us always seek the victories over spiritual corruption and death with the Holy Eucharist. In Liturgy, during the Confession, the Priest says that Communion is “given for us for salvation, remission of sins, and eternal life to those who partake of Him”. As St. Gregory of Nazianzus says, “the Eucharist is the ultimate combination agent. It unites us with Christ, who is a God-made man. In doing so, it restores the order between body and soul leading to eternal life, instead of death. It also binds fellow partakers into one mystical Body of Christ.”