



wife, and now lives as a widower? Where's his comfort? What about you, when you must bury someone you love most dearly. Where's your comfort?

If the comfort we take from our Gospel reading is merely knowing what our Lord *can* do, that is not saving faith. Instead, faith trusts what God *will* do for me – for you – on the Last Day. The only-begotten son of the widow would die again. We know this to be true because the title of first fruits of the resurrection belongs to Jesus (1 Cor 15:20). But the only-begotten Son of God did not die again. Jesus died once. But He rose. Christ is living! He is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia! And because Jesus lives, all who believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins will, like the widow's son, be raised to new life. But unlike the widow's son, our bodies will be resurrected imperishable – never to die again... just like Jesus.

Jesus raising the widow's son at Nain foreshadows your own resurrection. It foreshadows the resurrection of all the saints who have preceded us in death. It is that hope, that certain promise that brings comfort to the widow today who must bury her child or husband. Or the widower who has to do the same. Or the brother or sister that has to bury one of their siblings or parents. Until Christ comes again, we are all like the widow at Nain, living through this veil of tears, watching the funeral procession unfold, as it were. But there is coming a time when Jesus can and will say, "Stop weeping." And just as His miracle at Nain caused the widow to stop weeping, so also on the Day of Resurrection, He will cause every tear to be eternally wiped from our eyes (Rev 7:17).

So while the Christian looks to the sure resurrection of the body on the Last Day, this doesn't mean we don't have any tangible means of comfort now. We have the Lord's Supper, where heaven comes to earth. In the Lord's Supper, we celebrate with the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven – all the deceased saints: children, husbands, wives, brothers, and sisters who now rest from their labors. For in the Sacrament of the Altar, we can glorify God as the crowds of Nain did, saying: "God has visited His people!" For our God visits us in the person of Jesus here and now, in His true body and blood under the bread and wine. Those aren't just empty words. That is the Gospel. True faith believes Jesus really and truly comes here today *for you, for me*.

Jesus raised that young man from the dead and took on the young man's uncleanness when He reached out and touched the bier. In the Sacrament of the Altar, we are reminded that Jesus took our uncleanness, our sins, when He became a curse for us by hanging on the cross (Gal 3:13). So here at the Lord's Table, we continue to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again (1 Cor 11:26).

If for some reason you find no hope or comfort in these words or perhaps struggle with doubt that God hasn't heard or answered your prayers for comfort, or if you find yourself still weeping like the widow at Nain, be reminded that "him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" as we heard in the Epistle reading (Eph 3:20), is always at the ready to strengthen and preserve you in both body and soul unto life everlasting here at His Table. God visits you every single Sunday, and He doesn't come empty-handed. He comes bringing the forgiveness of sins, which faith believes and receives. And where there is the forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. On this side of glory there is nothing more comforting than that. "To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Eph 3:21). Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia! Amen.