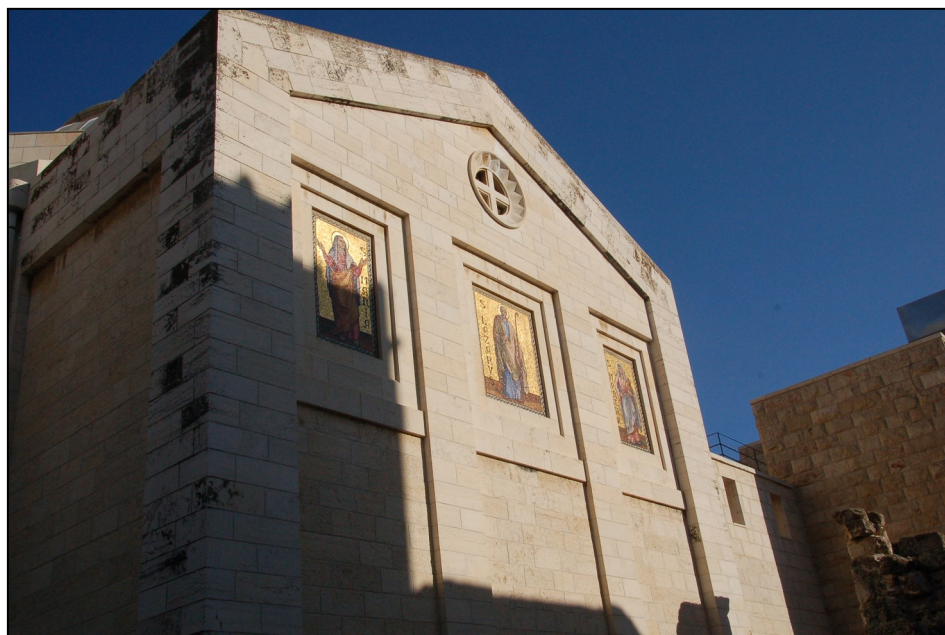




Please Give Generously to the
Pontifical Good Friday Holy Land Collection

Fifth Sunday of Lent: Jesus, You Raise Us Up!

When Lazarus died, it was more than just a physical event. Spiritually, for the family members who remained, it was a final end. It was the death of any hope they had for Lazarus to be cured. When Jesus raised Lazarus, He not only restored his life; he also restored the hope of all those around Him. Jesus showed everyone that there was something stronger than death - something that could never be extinguished. It was the realization that Jesus was and is "the resurrection and the life" (Jn 11:25). Because of that truth proven by the raising of Lazarus, hope is something that we as Christians can always have because we are told by Christ that "whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live" (*ibid*).



St. Lazarus Greek Orthodox Church in Bethany

Help For Holy Land Christians

Franciscan Good Friday Collection:

www.myfranciscan.org

Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem:

www.holysepulchre.net

Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

www.lpj.org

The village of Bethany was home to Martha, Mary and Lazarus. It is mentioned a handful of times in the Gospels, but the raising of Lazarus is the most famous of those encounters between Jesus and His dear friends. Bethany is only 1.5 miles east of Jerusalem on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives. But because it is located in the West Bank that is surrounded by the thirty-foot high separation wall, which only allows entrance and exit through Israeli checkpoints, it takes 45 minutes to drive to Bethany from Jerusalem today. The present day village of Bethany is home to the St. Lazarus Greek Orthodox Church, which houses beautiful mosaics that depict the Biblical events of Jesus with Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

Today, when we hear of the repeated violence in the Holy Land, it seems like a hopeless situation. Christians there face

many difficulties and obstacles. They live as a double minority: as Christians in a largely Muslim culture and as Palestinians living under an Israeli occupation. As difficult as this is, they still manage to live out their faith daily. They even have a common saying: "We live in a land that has experienced Resurrection, so we as Christians always have hope."

Whether by the example that Jesus gave us in the raising of Lazarus, or the inspiration that is provided for us by the Christians in the Holy Land today, we as followers of Christ can and must always have hope. One way we can support and give hope to our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land is to make a generous contribution to the Pontifical Good Friday Collection this Lent.