



## ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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My Dear Friends:

I have been wondering how you are all coping with the social distancing, and adjusting to the confines of your homes. How many of you are wondering when will this all end. We feel uncomfortable as the coronavirus changes the course and normalcy of our lives, and the way we live.

The gospel reading for this coming Sunday from John 11:1-45, is a story about two sisters, Mary and Martha, who were about to see their lives change. Lazarus, their brother, was ill and they sent word to Jesus, their friend. When he hears this, He doesn't go immediately to Lazarus. Instead, Jesus remains where He was for two more days, and by the time, He arrives in Bethany, Lazarus had already died, long enough to be in a decomposed state. Eventually, Jesus will raise Lazarus from the dead and restore the lives of this family back to normalcy as they knew it.

I am often intrigued by Jesus' lack of urgency to go to His friend who's obviously gravely ill and the reason He gives for not going: "This illness does not lead to death," Jesus says, "rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (John 11:4). What Jesus seems to be saying is that God is still in control and that God's glory will be revealed as a result of Lazarus' death and rising.

And it makes me realize that in a time like this, even in spite of all the changes that are taking place, the isolation we are experiencing, our schools, companies, even our churches have closed their doors, the half million people who are confirmed with this virus, the thousands who have died, we need to remember that God is still in control. Even when we think that God should act immediately and put an end to this ordeal, God is still in control. When we want God to do things on our terms, God is still in control. Yes, my friends, God is still in control...and His glory will be revealed in the fullness of time. Remember, God's glory will be revealed in the restoration of our society and the world.

May we continue to love, support, and care for one another and to wait patiently on the Lord. As we grapple with and seek relief from this pandemic, I encourage you to remain unwavering in your faith, knowing that God is still in control and all will be revealed in His own time.

With love and affection,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Tony

The Reverend Anthony B. Holder, D. Min., *Rector*  
The Reverend Alan Gellert, *Deacon*