

The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

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Date: 05 October 2025

Preacher: Fr. Randall Russell

[0 : 00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. No loving parent ever wants to watch his children suffer.

! We would much rather it be us who have to make that late night trip to the emergency room rather than our children. We would much rather it be us who are forced to lie in bed sick rather than our own sons and daughters.

And I imagine that the same was true for the woman in this morning's gospel as well. She probably wished it was her lying in that coffin rather than her only son.

But of course, that was not her decision to make. In fact, it is never our decision to make. None of us can take the place of another.

None of us can absorb a loved one's cancer or go back in time and trade places with those of whom we care. Not all children will outlive their parents, and the righteous can die just as easily as the wicked.

[1 : 16] Life isn't fair. And often the only thing that seems for certain is death. But remember, that is only how it seems.

Sin, death, and the devil are the masters of what only seems to be, but never the masters of what truly is. Grief is not more palpable than hope, and death is not more final than life.

For even though death may certainly have its day, that day is not forever. Ever since Jesus Christ birthed forth from the tomb and still lives on to this very day, hope springs eternal.

And that is the truth. And that is what is most real. Death has not won. Death cannot and will not win.

Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. And no one, no one can undo what Jesus Christ himself has already done.

[2 : 40] For we may not be able to take the place of another, to die someone else's death in order to impart our life upon them.

But Jesus Christ can. And he doesn't require us to understand exactly how. Just as he doesn't need our permission to do the things he does.

For Christ Jesus did not need the widow of name's permission to come to her dead son's wake. For our Lord is like the character of Aslan in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia.

An untamed lion who freely goes where and whenever he pleases. And so if our Lord wants to interrupt the funeral procession of the widow of name's son in order to return the young man back to his mother alive and well, he will do it.

He doesn't need us to understand why. He doesn't need our permission. He will march right up to that young man's coffin touch that which according to the law of Moses would make him ceremonially unclean.

[3 : 57] And he will bestow his own purity and life upon another. Making the dead man live. Making the unclean clean.

For although none of us can take the place of another, Jesus Christ can. Which is why in his first epistle St. Peter explains, For Christ also suffered once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

For no earthly parent ever wants to watch his or her own children suffer, and neither does our heavenly Father. Therefore, therefore God gave up his one and only son, the just for the unjust, the clean for the unclean, in order that every grieving mother's sons and daughters might be cleansed, in order that we might be cleansed, and become what by nature he himself already is.

And that is, a living, breathing child of the Most High God. And so, even though today is not Easter, that does not make what I am about to say any less true.

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia. And so shall those who have died in Christ one day rise as well.

[5 : 40] Alleluia. And amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.