

5th Sunday Lent Year A Homily

Another gospel preparing us for the events of Easter, another story of coming to faith.

But when Martha sat down later, with her brother, Lazarus, next to her once more, what can she have made of it?

She loved and trusted Jesus, and she believes in him, and so she finds herself able to make her statement of faith.

Martha knows Jesus well. She gives him a hard time about her brother.

And yet when he declares himself in this extraordinary way, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' she can respond, 'I believe.'

But what is this extraordinary event about?

What does it take to believe? To hold on to this belief?

What effect does it have on her daily life? How is she changed?

We look to our life after death and see what Jesus is offering. But as believers we are Easter people. We are to live as people of faith, now not just later.

People with the risen Jesus as our guide, our example, us called to act in a faith-filled way.

And as such, we can affect the lives of others in an immediate way to bring them new life.

We become agents, Jesus' agents, of the message of resurrection. We can affect lives here.

(I sort of wish I could bring new life to Blackpool F C, but that is not what I am talking about.)

I have seen this, for example, in Malawi in the work of Mary's Meals who are with us today, supplying the food that women get up really early in the morning to make huge pots of breakfast for the children who have little to eat, before they go to school.

Or, because Friday was the feast of Oscar Romero, new life came to him as a very quiet traditional bishop, when two of his priests opened his eyes to the plight of the poor in El Salvador, and he began to speak out on their behalf against the military and oppression. It changed his life and then through him that of so many others, this belief in a new life Jesus is offering.

He gave his own life because of this, shot at the altar.

Which single act brings us to Good Friday.