

Easter 3B

An old woman was going through a time of great doubt about the existence of God. This both puzzled and troubled her for it had never happened before. In desperation she went to a priest for help. She expected some convincing arguments to prove to her, beyond all doubt, that Jesus came back from the dead. She was very surprised that the priest did not take this line at all. His advice was very simple which, at the time, didn't make much sense. He told her to go out and begin to do specific acts of love and kindness for the people in her life, and she would begin to see things differently. She followed his advice and in no time at all her doubts about God completely disappeared.

The Resurrection of Jesus is an event which no one witnessed - no one saw what actually took place. But did they need to? Far more important are those post Resurrection appearances of Jesus to various individuals like Mary Magdalene or the apostles – people who had a special place for Jesus in their hearts and were intent on following him. You will notice that Jesus didn't appear to Pilate or Herod or the High Priest - they had hardened their hearts towards Him and wanted Him out of the way. In the same way Jesus didn't come down from the Cross when his enemies mockingly challenged him to do so. The one exception was Paul but then again he never knew Jesus in the flesh like the others.

A personal faith in the Resurrection of Jesus does not happen instantly. It has to be woven into the fabric of life. That was the priest's advice to the woman struggling to believe. We have to live the Gospel before we get to know the person behind the words. St John says: "anyone who says 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments is a liar". We will never know how to swim, for instance, by reading books on swimming - we have to put the book down and get into the water. We will never become fluent in a language unless we start speaking it. I will

never be a witness to the Resurrection unless my thoughts, words and actions are motivated by love. Blessed Mother Theresa o Calcutta used to the say that the greatest hunger in this world is not for food but for love.

But it has to be the bread and butter of my everyday life. That's why I'm always a bit dubious about 'a signs and wonders religion' - the kind Thomas and the apostles seemed to be looking for, initially at least. Jesus said; 'it is a faithless generation which asks for a sign'. Even in today's Gospel, Jesus, after coming back from the dead, wanted to appear as normal as possible by sharing food with with the apostles thereby showing he was a real flesh and blood person and not a ghost

So, in our daily round let us be the feet, hands, eyes and ears of Jesus bringing the power of resurrection to those ready to receive it. Since we are Easter people, let's live up to our calling.