

Easter 3B

An old woman was going through a time of great doubt about the existence of God. 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. 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. All they were confronted with was an empty tomb. But far more important are those post Resurrection appearances of Jesus to various individuals like Mary Magdalene and the apostles – people who had a special place for Him in their hearts. You will notice that Jesus never appeared to Herod or Annas, the High Priest, or Caiphas who 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.

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 live the gospel is a liar". We will never know how to swim by merely reading manuals on it - we have to put the book down and get into the water. We will never learn how to ride a bike without falling off it a few times. I will never witness to the Resurrection unless my intentions are motivated by love. We learn to love by loving others as Jesus asks us to do. Saint Mother Theresa of Calcutta said that the greatest hunger in this world is not for food but for love. If we can go some way in

satisfying that hunger in the world then our doubts about the resurrection begin to dissolve.

But it has to be the bread and butter of my everyday life. That's why I'm always a bit dubious about people chasing after extraordinary signs and wonders in their religion to prop up their faith. 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 eating grilled fish before their very eyes then showing them his wounds, thereby demonstrating he was a real flesh and blood person and not a ghost or some imaginary figure.

So, in our daily round let us be the feet, hands, eyes and ears of Jesus bringing the power of His resurrection to those open to receive it. We are Easter people, proud to be at the service of our Risen Lord.