

On Sunday morning when we listen to the lessons, we are hearing parts of our stories of faith in Scripture. We know that the Good News stories in the Gospel readings are not timelines, but it is easy to forget that we are people who have heard the Good News of the resurrection and that we gather to remember in power and action why our encounter with Scripture and the Good News is important in our everyday living. As people of faith, we listen, study and pray, encountering the One who makes all things new, calls to us to stand fast, to care for one another and to rejoice with God's creation.

On any day we may "hear" the Good News in a way that deepens our faith and stirs us to act in our relationship to others with forgiveness, food, a phone call or a prayer. Some words of scripture descend into our heart; "though I walk through the valley of shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me," and become part of us. Other scriptures, like Jesus being challenged by a story of a woman who married seven husbands and had no children seem like they have no power to stir our hearts and minds.

So, we might ask why is Jesus is often questioned by the crowd, Pharisees or Sadducees by a challenge, as though to try to trick him? What is it about human nature that makes us want to trip people up, presumably questioning their authenticity? In today's Gospel, Luke takes advantage of Jesus' power to turn questions upside down. What if a woman has no children and her husband dies and she marries each of his six brothers who also die and still has no children, is not about resurrection. Perhaps the crowd laughed at the absurdity of the question. What is her relationship to the seven brothers? Or do I too wonder about the resurrection?

Jesus responds that the Sadducees do not understand about the resurrection; they seem unable to imagine a different way of living together after death. In the resurrection, the social order that they imagine, does not exist. The woman does not belong to anyone. The social order that presumes the woman must marry and have children, or that slaves belong to their master is turned upside down. Relationship is about a person's relationship to the Living God, the God of Moses, the "I Am" of the burning bush and the "I Am" the Resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel of John. We are already invited to be a part of this new world order as Easter people, people of the resurrection in this moment and in the life to come. We are a beloved child of God.



And still, we do ask, on rainy days, dark nights and when we are with the people we love—"What is death and resurrection and what is New Life?" How can I live it here and now? How do I believe? What happens when the person I love dies—or me? My experience is that faith is not static. Our relationship with Christ grows and changes as we live and encounter the powerful stories of our unique lives and enter the lives of others. It is about New Life.

God calls to us. We have glimpses of God's Love here and now and we cry with Job "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth," and find our lives changed. God Loves. How shall we respond to this assurance of New Life now?

Dorothy Day wrote in the Catholic Worker in 1946, in a world filled with fear and anxiety. about her conviction to feed the hungry and respond to the poor. We too respond in faith.

*What we would like to do is change the world—make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And to a certain extent, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute—the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor, in other words—we can to a certain extent change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever-widening circle will reach around the world.*

*We repeat, there is nothing that we can do but love, and dear God—please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as well as our friend.*

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