

This morning, I was reading the scripture with Wednesday. And we get about halfway through it, and she tells me to stop. And I asked her why she wanted me to stop. And she said, well, this is incredibly sad. She didn't say incredibly, she used a much more energetic word. I'm, like, well, why is it sad? She's, like, well, Jesus's friend died. I am like right, but if we stop here, he stays dead. If we keep reading, we find out that he's actually going to get better. And she's, like, I don't believe you. I'm like, no, it's true. If we keep reading this story, we will find out that Lazarus comes back to life. That he ends up being so much better. Her response was let me see. So I hand it to her. That way she knows, without a doubt, that that's what it really says. And that it's not just me changing the story to make her feel better at the end.

And I was thinking about that while we're talking. I love the fact that she doesn't trust me at all. She does trust me, she trusts me in a lot of ways. But she always has to find out the truth for herself. And that's a lot like today's reading. Jesus could have at any time healed Lazarus. He could have done it from anywhere. He didn't have to be there. He could have simply said, come out and been on the other side of the Jordan River, been on the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He could have been anywhere, Like he was with the Centurion and his son. Just simply said you're healed. And it could have been done. But he chose not. Not only did he choose not to, he chose to wait until there was no question that Lazarus was dead.

At that time, they would have people checking on the tombs for three straight days. They believe that by the third day, your soul had left. There's no chance that there was a mistake. So he intentionally waited till the fourth day. He intentionally waited until everyone was there and then did it. And then said, come out.

It's so different believing when you see something as opposed to believing when you're told something. Why? If we truly believe, why do we have to see it? But we do, even today. So many people I talk with all the time do not believe, because they haven't seen it. But what point do you have to see? I know, when I was struggling with my faith, I could not wrap my head around somebody being dead for three days in this case four, and getting up and being able to walk out. I had to see it. Now, I don't have to see it. I don't have to see it because I see God's love and work in so many other ways that it's okay for me to not have to see that one thing. I see God's love and the work that we do every day. I see God Love in the children, how they act, how they interact because they don't care. They don't care about anything. They don't care who you are, what color you are, what race you are, what your orientation is, what your name is, how old you are, how much money you make. They don't care about any of that. What they care about is love. They will help, no matter what, even if they can't.

Wednesday was hilarious this morning. She still feels bad about my leg. So when I was printing the bulletins, she took every single bulletin once I stapled it and ran it out here, so I didn't have to walk out each time. At the library yesterday there's so many kids that were helping each other spread their cheese whiz looking frosting on their graham crackers. We see kids' love every day.

They don't have to see The Resurrection. They know it happened. They don't understand it. They don't want to understand it. They don't need to understand it. But they show God's love in so many ways we can't even imagine. And that helps me. That helps me with my cynicism. My idea that I have to know everything right. I have to see it happen. I have to be a part of the actual thing. I don't anymore, and I say that as I'm on 27 committees and then I'm constantly doing a whole bunch of things. But I don't have to see everything that God does to

know that God is real to know that his love embraces us and covers us at all times. To know that death isn't the end.

That's a big one. We fear death so much because we don't know, because there's always that doubt in the back of our minds. But God's love is there to embrace all of us. It's there to make sure that we continue on. To make sure that there is something after the resurrection. You know, Martha says, in this reading today, that she knows they will be reborn at the end. That's the first time in any of the gospels that anybody says that. Her faith is so strong she doesn't need to see it. She knows that God will protect us and lead us on after this into the next life. And now she sees her brother raised. And she gets to go and share that story with so many because Jesus doesn't tell them at this point to not tell anybody. He tells them to share it. To go and talk about it openly about God's love because this is the end for him. This is the end for him. Jesus knows that he's going to be going into Jerusalem in a couple of days. He knows that the end is going to come very quickly. That the Holy Week is going to start. So this is his last chance to let everyone know that they need to share this story.

Just like with us. We need to share God's love as best as we can, because there's so much hate and anger and frustration in the world .That we see all the time. But now we have a chance to share the story and to share the love in ways that so many people can't imagine because they're missing it because they have to see it happen. And by the works that we do and the works that the children do. We get to share that story. Let us pray.