

So today, I want to begin by asking you to think back – way back – to a whole month ago – to the feast of the Ascension. Our second reading that day was taken from the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles – written by the same author as the Gospel of Luke.

There, in Acts, Luke tells us that in the Gospel – he wrote down all that Jesus said and taught so that they, the disciples – and hence, us – can be Christ’s witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria – and to the ends of the earth.

So the Gospel of Luke, as well as Matthew, Mark, and John – are written not so much as historical accounts [which is why they don’t always agree in content or details] but are written as accounts of faith – so that people can come to believe in Jesus Christ – and so be his witnesses in the world.

So beginning today on this 10th Sunday of Ordinary Time – we begin a faith journey – which stretches with the uninterrupted reading of the Gospel of Luke for the next 24 weeks – all the way to the beginning of Advent on November 26th – so that we can learn more about Jesus – in order to be more effective witnesses of him in the world.

So throughout these Sundays of Ordinary Time – we will hear Jesus tell lots of stories, called parables, and we will hear of his interactions with some interesting people like the sisters Martha and Mary, 10 Lepers on the road outside of Jerusalem – and the tree-climbing Zacchaeus.

We will also learn that Jesus likes to eat – as often times we find him dining at the tables of friends as well as foes – like just next week when he is eating in the home of a Pharisee when a woman comes along and washes his feet with her tears.

And this whole time when we listen to what the Gospel has to offer us – our mission, our goal – is to learn more about Jesus so that we can place our faith in him – and become his witnesses in the world.

So what a good time to pick back up the regular reading of Luke’s Gospel – with this incredible story of the raising of a dead man – the only son of a widow – who would not want to throw in their lot with someone who can raise a dead person back to life? Who would not want to go out and proclaim such wonderful news?

Well, in all honesty, probably more than just a few of us – because we are afraid of what others might think of us if we would be so transparent in our faith! But, we have time – 24 weeks – to overcome our fear and hesitancy. . .

For now, let’s look at the similar stories we have in two of our readings. . . Most times for the Sunday readings – the 1st reading from the Old Testament is chosen to go along with the Gospel reading – which is certainly the case for today.

Both in 1st Kings and Luke – we hear about living and dying and just how close the two are related. In both stories, the women experiencing the death of their sons – have already experienced the death of their spouses.

In the patriarchal society of the Bible having a husband and a son were sign of God’s blessing upon a woman – as well as their support system throughout life. Now, having lost both of these

protective men in their lives – these women are alone, vulnerable, and have no one to take care of the – or to protect them in a very violent society.

So what would be the reaction of these women after Elijah and Jesus give them their sons back – giving them a new lease on life?

I would think elation, great gratitude, a leap for joy. . .

And do you think they would keep this good news to themselves?

I doubt it – they would be out proclaiming the good news to anyone and everyone who would listen – and even those who could care less. . .

Imagine the neighbors after a week or so – “there goes Sarah again -- as if we don’t know that man named Jesus brought Seth back from the grave. How many times does she have to tell us?”

But that’s the same attitude – that’s the same unstoppable enthusiasm – the same gutsy words and actions we need to have to be Christ’s witnesses in the world. . .

We all need to be a bit like Paul who boldly tells the Galatians – from his mother’s womb – God set him apart and called him through grace – to reveal his Son to him, so that he might proclaim Christ to the Gentiles.

So we will spend the remainder of these Sundays of Ordinary time – watching, and listening, and learning about Jesus – so our faith can increase, and our fears decrease --- and we may minister in the service of the Gospel – insuring that the Good News about Jesus is spread in Jerusalem, throughout Samaria and Judea – yes, even to the ends of the earth. . .