

JULY 29 2025 DEACON KEVIN DAUDLIN

Have you ever been in a situation where you were panicking because something hadn't been done—something you needed right now—and yet, those around you didn't seem to care or share your urgency?

I'm sure that's exactly how Martha and Mary felt when they sent word to Jesus that their brother was seriously ill and getting worse. This context is so important to understand their state of mind. Despite the urgency, Jesus didn't come. As the hours passed, right up to Lazarus dying, I'm sure they were anxiously wondering: Where is Jesus?

Then, their panic turned into grief—and perhaps even some anger.

“We've seen Jesus help so many people. Why not our brother—whom we know Jesus loved?”

Unfortunately, I see this kind of pain on a daily basis. As deacons, we have full-time jobs outside our Church duties. I happen to be a funeral director, which I've done for many years. I deal with death and grief every single day. And quite often, families are angry—for many different reasons.

Yes, sometimes they feel that the person should have been healed and never have died. Grief is a reality, even for us Catholics. Some people feel that as Christians, we shouldn't grieve at all—especially if we believe. But in truth, we all grieve. The difference is: we have hope.

I believe Martha and Mary shared that same hope. Even when Jesus finally arrives—four days after Lazarus had died—it's not surprising that Martha, the strong one who gets things done, goes out to meet him while Mary stays behind in the house.

When Martha reaches Jesus, she says, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”* But she doesn’t say it with anger or even despair. She simply makes a point, and then adds, **“I know that God will give you whatever you ask of Him.”*

Jesus responds, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live. And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

That is a profoundly beautiful statement. But what He says next is the most important part:

“Do you believe this?”

He didn’t try to comfort her in the usual way. He didn’t ask how she was doing. He asked about her faith. Because in the end, it’s faith that gets us through our grief—and through all the other things going on in our lives.

When we have faith, we have hope. And when we have hope, God will come to our aid—especially when we are in overwhelming situations. Like Martha, we need to go meet Jesus and bring our wants and needs to Him. That’s the difficult part.

In these trying times, our faith may waver. We may even ask, **“Lord, if you had been here, this would not have happened.”** We believe when we feel Christ’s presence, but when we are overwhelmed and can’t feel Him, we begin to question.

“He helps others. Why not me?”

I’m sure Martha was aware of the miracles Jesus had performed. She probably even heard about the healing of the official’s son—from a distance. So she would have known that Jesus didn’t necessarily need to be physically present to heal Lazarus. I imagine all sorts of thoughts were running through their minds, just as they do for us:

If only things had been different.
If only I had done it another way.
Maybe the timing could have been better.

But through our faith, we remember: God is always aware of what's going on. He's waiting on us to respond. He's knocking at the door—it's up to us to invite Him in.

It doesn't matter what's going on in our lives, or if we feel too ashamed or embarrassed to let Him in. God will still come. Our faith tells us: never abandon hope. Whether God relieves our burdens or asks us to endure suffering, He remains with us.

And that's where we often stumble. Pain and suffering can so easily smother hope. It's difficult to remain hopeful when we see all that's happening around us. Even though I go to Church regularly and pray every day, I too become overwhelmed with fears and anxiety.

But faith helps us understand that everything—good or bad—is meant to strengthen us. God knows what good can come from even the worst moments in our lives.

I've experienced this personally, at different times. Just because we're clergy doesn't mean we're exempt from trials. I have asked, **“God, why are you punishing me like this?”** At times, my faith dipped. But I persevered. And looking back, I now understand: I was being led through those situations—not pushed into them. They made me stronger. And yes, my life today is better because of those difficult seasons.

Sometimes, our lives are disrupted by others—or even by our own selfish desires. Yet we carry on, trusting that God will never abandon us. He promised us that, even when we can't feel Him, He rests in our hearts.

This gives us the assurance that Jesus will intervene. And that, ultimately, is love. That's what our faith is—love. And that love is the very definition of hope: our belief that our circumstances will change for the better because of His love for us.

By focusing on that love, seeking forgiveness, finding strength in prayer and in one another, we can recover hope. And through faith, we will discover a path to healing.