

IHOMILY 5TH SUN LENT YRA 2017

I think a lot of you have heard of Matthew Kelly. A few years ago he spent quite a bit of time with hospice nurses. They told him that many dying people talk to them about how they wish they would have lived their lives differently. These are some of the things he listed:

- I wish I would have spent more time with the people I love.
- I wish I would have made spirituality more of a priority.
- I wish I would have discovered my purpose earlier.
- I wish I had taken more risks.
- I wish I would have stayed in touch with old friends.
- I wish I had thought about life's big questions earlier.
- I wish I had perused more of my dreams.

None of these things really surprise me. What would you include in your list? We all have another chance to change our lives each day.

In the Gospel reading today Jesus resuscitates Lazarus. Like Lazarus we will all die; however unlike Lazarus, most of us will not get a second chance. I wonder what Lazarus thought when he was resuscitated. Did he have regrets? Did he have areas where he wished he would have lived his life differently? Did he make any big changes in his life? We do not really know. We can just speculate.

When Jesus arrived at the tomb, Martha and Mary both believed that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying. They also believed that Lazarus would rise again on the last day. They did not believe Jesus could resuscitate Lazarus. What about you? How many people think Jesus can prevent us from dying? How many people think we will be raised up on the last day? How many people think Jesus can raise you to new life today?

Think about the things that you would have done differently if you were dying today. You have an opportunity to change things today. What is stopping you? Do you believe Jesus will help you? Do you believe Jesus will bring people into your life to help you? Jesus obviously had the power to resuscitate Lazarus; it is there in the Gospel. When he raised Lazarus from the dead he told the people there: “Untie him and let him go.” Jesus will bring new life to you today, and he will also untie you and let you go. It is up to you to take it from there. So what are some of the things that keep us tied up? What is preventing us from moving to new life? I took a second look at the list that Matthew Kelly made, and I think the dying patients named some of the things that prevent us from changing.

- I wish I had the courage to just be myself. God made each of us in his own image with gifts and talents and each of us is very good. Are you trying to be something you’re not?
- I wish I had not spent so much time working. Certainly you need to work to support yourself and your family, but do you really need to work as much as you do?
- I wish I hadn’t spent so much time worrying about things that never happened. Are the what ifs preventing you from doing what you were meant to do?
- I wish I had cared less about what people thought. Maybe we need to let that go and just do what we know is right.
- I wish I had lived more in the moment. This day is really all we have. We could be dead tomorrow. We have another opportunity to live differently today.

Is something missing in your life? Maybe you need to make some changes so you do not reach the end of your life wishing you have done things differently. We are reaching the end of Lent. Maybe we need to start changing our lives. Maybe today is time for the first step. Jesus will help you.