

Homily
5th Sunday of Lent
March 22, 2026

Open Doors, Open Hearts: The Resurrection Within

When Jesus travelled from Galilee to Jerusalem, he had a favourite place to rest—the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany. This was not a palace or a temple, but an ordinary house where three siblings lived ordinary lives. Yet it became holy ground simply because they opened their door to Jesus.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus show us that sainthood does not require us to be superhuman. They were ordinary people who opened their home and hearts to Jesus. They experienced doubt, grief, and loss. What made them saints was their willingness to bring all of these—their questions, their pain, their hope—directly to Jesus.

Their home in Bethany became sacred not because they were perfect, but because they were authentic. When Jesus needed rest, they gave him a place to lay his head. When they needed comfort, they didn't hesitate to call for him.

The resurrection at Bethany did not begin the moment Lazarus walked out of the tomb. It had already begun long before—in the relationship, in the trust, in the love that Mary and Martha had cultivated with Jesus. When Martha stepped out to meet Jesus and declared, "*I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God,*" something rose to life in her before her brother ever did. Faith itself is resurrection. The stone rolled back in her heart before it rolled back from the grave.

And perhaps that is the deeper miracle. Lazarus' physical resurrection was a sign pointing to something Jesus longs to do in every human heart. How many of us carry within us places that have grown cold and silent: relationships buried under resentment, dreams sealed in disappointment, faith entombed by grief or routine? Jesus stands at the entrance of those places in our lives and calls us by name. Resurrection is not only an event at the end of time; it is an invitation in the present moment. Every time we open our hearts to the Lord, something dead stirs back to life.

Whenever I walk around Strathfield, I'm struck by the architectural beauty surrounding me—houses with floor-to-ceiling glass windows and sleek modern lines. Yet for all their visual openness, the doors remain firmly

closed. I think of the small village where I grew up, where doors stood open throughout the day like welcoming arms. Neighbours would spot you and wave you inside for conversation over steaming coffee and homemade treats. You would set out for a simple walk and return home with a full stomach and a warm heart.

Can we experience resurrection in our daily lives? I believe we can. Like the example of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, we begin with simple hospitality, that is, opening our schedules to prayer, setting our phones aside, creating space where Christ can rest in our busy lives, bringing our real concerns to God rather than reciting perfect prayers.

Lord, through the intercession of Saints Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, help us open our ordinary lives to your extraordinary presence. May our homes and hearts become places where you find rest, and where we find resurrection. Amen.