CCR Funeral Homily
Barbara Lippincott Martin
September 19, 2026

+ In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

96 years is an incredibly long life! And yet, it's still not enough. It would **never** be enough! For **everyone** and **everything** that Barbara held **so dear.**

Today's Gospel passage speaks of the raw human emotions that surface at death – maybe you are feeling them. **Anger. Guilt. Bargaining**. The **What ifs.** All so very natural. And when we are deep in emotion, Jesus is most present, calling us back to the essence of our faith. As we hear in today's Gospel passage from John, Martha is **furious** at her brother Lazarus' death.

She is furious, both that her brother is dead, AND, that Jesus took his sweet time in getting there. She is **so mad** that she can't even wait for Jesus to arrive at their home. She runs out and meets him on the road, in for a public scolding. We can almost imagine her smacking his face as she screams**, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died."** In other words, **"it's all your fault."**

And Jesus takes the opportunity not only to console Martha, assuring her that her brother will rise again. But also, to allow her to truly speak what's in her heart. And so comes Jesus' provocative question to Martha, "**Do you believe this**?" he asks. And what is **this? This** means that Jesus is the resurrection

and the life. That He is the Lord of all. The end all, be all. Period, no matter what. And Martha picked it right up. She goes on to firmly say, **"Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the One coming into the world**. Yes Lord, I believe that you can do it all, and that you are here right now. And then Jesus goes on to **demonstrate** his power right before their very eyes.

The next segment of the story, not in your leaflet, goes like this. Then they went on to Lazarus' tomb. And there Jesus gives just two quick commands. ***"Take away the stone***." And ***"Lazarus come out."*** And with that, Lazarus himself walked out of the tomb and they ***"unbound him and let him go."*** After all they had been through – the raw emotions of nearly a week, Jesus once again systematically inverted the situation, so that they might believe in him. Believe in his power over disease and death itself. It is a fantastic, and jaw-dropping scene. And today we get to participate in it by considering our own response.

Do you believe this? Do you believe that Jesus can resurrect anything and anyone? Do you believe that He can change any situation, no matter how hopeless? Do you believe that death **does not** have the final say? Today, we say **Yes!** And celebrate our shared belief in these ideals as we bury dear Barbara. This **hope** is the essence of our faith. And it is not an empty hope, but a time-tested and demonstrated hope. In which we still find ourselves today. Do you believe this? is the provocative question Jesus asks Martha…

Do you believe that Jesus is resurrection and life? That **in Him** there is no darkness at all? That our material world doesn't matter? Engage the question! Do you believe this? And wherever you struggle, there is your spiritual work for this **new season** in which we now find ourselves. Pray on it, work on it, talk with others, call me for support. ***Do you believe this?*** is the question that brings us together and offers some consolation today!

Barbara has now entered that realm where earthly time has no meaning. 96 years have become **eternal.** The seasons of life have finally evened out. She so faithfully lived a life in communion with the natural world. In harmony, with God's creation. Steadily harnessing the wind to propel her forward. Finding direction on the water. Not afraid to push away from the earth. From today's scripture…***For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to love.*** The love remains. And it is now enfolded in the perfect love of our Maker. **The Memorial Garden** that she so faithfully tended, here at Christ Church, through- out all seasons, will now serve as her resting place. How fitting!

As I visited Barbara in her last days, and learned more about her life, I was especially struck by the enormous volume of mostly sailing trophies and recognition pieces that line her living room wall. Not for their material value or vain glory. But for what they represent. They speak of one who lived in service to both God and community. A nod to incredible citizenship AND Christian

discipleship. Wonderful stewardship of her body, and talents, and spunk, for the benefit of her family, for women, for Riverton, for the environment. Indeed, every accolade was yet another indicator of how **"in tune"** she was with her own being, her God-given capabilities, and all of creation. Her **witness** is an incredible inspiration, for which we must give thanks to our Maker, AND find our own inspiration. And so as I close, I invite you to meditate on the place of **trophies** as we sang in our opening hymn…now hear those words again…

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall…

Sinners, whose love can never forget the wormwood and the gall

Go spread your trophies at his feet, and crown him Lord of all!

Go spread your trophies at his feet, and crown him Lord of all!

And for that ***awesome*** vision of Barbara now, we give thanks to Almighty God, ***Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen!***