



Honest hope

Week 2: Thursday



Reading

John 11.17-27

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, '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. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

Reflection

I sense so much emotion in Martha's words to Jesus.

Her brother has just died, and Jesus didn't arrive in time to stop that happening – her words feel soaked in all of the regret, disappointment and anguish usually encapsulated in any 'if only...' statement.

And then, seemingly out of nowhere, comes a huge dollop of hope. She has faith that 'even now', even though her brother has been dead for at least four days, Jesus can turn things around. Here's what that teaches me – hope *can* sit alongside feelings of despair, confusion and desperation. And, what's more, you can take all of those feelings to God at the very same time. Hope doesn't require you to pretend you're not hurting. Brutal honesty with God is the sign of a fighting hope, not a fading one.

Challenge

Today, why don't we give radical honesty with God a try – what emotions are sitting alongside your hope, emotions you feel shouldn't be there? Tell him.



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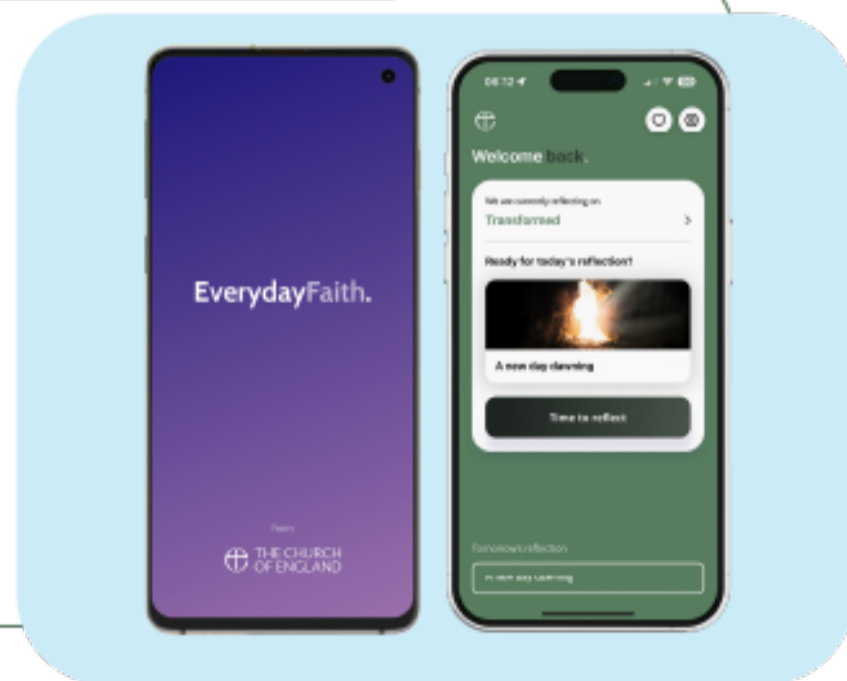
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The adults' reflections have been written by Cathrine Fungai-Ngangira and Belle Tindall (both among the authors of *Wild Bright Hope: The Big Church Read Lent Book 2025* (SPCK)) and Victoria Mason.

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