

Remember My Story

What was supposed to be a joyful Easter Sunday turned out to be a horrific nightmare.

Alexandria and her mom, Manik, were excited to go to Easter Sunday mass that morning at St. Sebastian's Catholic Church. So Alexandria's father, Sudesh, led his 10 year old daughter and wife into that sacred place to pray, to rejoice, to commune with God. Sudesh had stepped out at the end of mass, but as the songs erupted in praise of the Savior's Resurrection, it was quickly replaced by deadly blasts.

Sudesh ran back in haste—only to find the lifeless bodies of his daughter and his wife.

"I just saw my daughter on the floor and I tried to lift her up, [but] she was already dead. And [then] exactly the same... next my wife is there... THAT'S THE END OF THE STORY of my daughter and wife."

The STORIES of many people's lives in Sri Lanka this weekend HAVE ENDED.

Sudesh weeping for his wife and child, or Jude Fernando who had just prepared a welcome celebration for his sister and three sons to Sri Lanka is now preparing their bodies for burial.

Like the disciples today, our faces are downcast, the faces of the people of Sri Lanka are downcast and it seems like our eyes are being prevented from seeing where Jesus is in all of this mess...where he is in THIS STORY.

Like the people of Sri Lanka, the disciples in our Gospel had hope: "We HAD HOPED that he would be the one to redeem Israel!" Sudesh **had hoped** to spend a beautiful Sunday afternoon with his family. Jude **had hoped** to finally be reunited with his sister and his nephews. But ALL of their **hopes** were dashed upon the ground by violence, by terrorism, by death.

Jesus! On the day we celebrate your victory over death, people died. THIS story does not make sense to us just like YOUR story did not make sense to your disciples!

Yet I believe that Jesus is gently reminding us just as he reminded the disciples: how slow of heart [you are] to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?

Jesus foretold his passion, death and resurrection to his apostles and disciples at least three times. Jesus foretold HIS story to them three times but each time they did not understand. They did not understand because their stories always ended with death. Death was always the final ending.

But Jesus repeats his story over and over again like he is saying: Listen to my story. Remember my story. I will be tortured, crucified and put to death but I will rise, I will trample death underfoot. Death you will be destroyed in me! Let this story burn within your hearts. Remember MY story because it is now YOUR story.

When you were baptized, when you received me into your heart just like all those people received me at St. Sebastian Church, when you received my body and blood, our two stories have now become one. And I have rewritten your story into mine so that even though it seems like your story ends, even though it seems like the stories of your wife, your children, your sister, your nephews have ended remember the next chapter of MY STORY. For they will rise and their story will continue forever in the bosom of the Father and the praises that were cut short here on earth will resound forever in the halls of heaven.

Open your eyes! Recognize me! Remember my story, remember our story.