**THEME:** NEW LIFE, NEW HOPE

**READINGS:** 1 Kings17:17-24/ Gal. 1:11-19/ Luke7:11-17

10th Sunday in Ordinary Time homily

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

Unlike the progressive situation of gender equality in many modern societies, the role of women in many ancient societies was limited to child bearing and upbringing, and domestic chores. In addition, they were not allowed to acquire properties. In such societies when women lost their husbands (the bread-winners) they ‘naturally’ lived in poverty. Often the sons of these widows were their only hope. One could therefore imagine the double agony these widows experienced when they lost their sons – the loss of their future security!

In both the first and gospel readings, the widows lost their only sons. There could be nothing more devastating for these widows. But in each case, **God gave a new lease of life to the son, and therefore a new hope for the mother** (widow). We might not be poor widows who have lost their only sons, but we might encounter various situations of double agony; for instance:

* When a student loses his father and drops out of school due to lack of funds;
* When one’s loss of job is followed by demands to pay some bills (e.g. hospital bills, school fees, rent charges, etc.);
* When a divorce is followed by sickness; etc.

In such situations, let us not despair; let us not contemplate suicide – even if there is no sign of help from anywhere. For in the story of the gospel reading, the widow of Nain had no inkling that help was coming from somewhere. For her and the family, their son was dead and his burial was their only concern, and so they made their way towards the burial place. But then out from nowhere Jesus appeared and raised the dead man! Similarly, **when we face a double agony and we cannot do anything about it, let us trust that Jesus can do something about it!**

Jesus can handle our troubling situations or difficulties in many ways. **As long as Jesus grants us life, let us hope for a brighter future.** And even if our agony is due to the loss of a beloved one, let us be assured that in Jesus even death is not the end (*cf*. John 11:17-44).

[*To reflect further on the fact that in Jesus even death is not the end,* y*ou may read the homily entitled*: ‘DEATH – THE END?]