



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER, CYCLE A

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"...while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him." Luke 24:30-31

Like so many of Luke's accounts of the life and work of Jesus, the "Road to Emmaus" Gospel account this week tells of the warmth and intimacy that has made these accounts memorable for every generation down through the ages.

Today's passage is filled with the kind of vivid detail and human emotion that makes the story of the disciples on the Road to Emmaus unforgettable. The scene is tranquil as the disciples make their way along the seven-mile walk. Their discussion is "lively." The Risen Jesus joins them in conversation, though He is unrecognizable until the disciples have a mystical encounter with this Risen Christ. In desolation, they are distressed, *"they stopped, looking downcast,"* and are struck by His seeming unawareness of the "things" about Jesus of Nazareth. *"What things?"* Jesus asks. And so each detail is described by the disciples, and tells a gratifying and gentle revelation.

In reflection this week, place yourself on this "Road to Emmaus." Experience, along with the disciples, that moment that leads up to the disciples' recognition of Jesus. In this passage, Jesus teaches us the importance of *Lectio Divina* in our lives. In this case, the Living Scriptures literally come forth from the mouth of the Risen Christ, *"one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord" Deut 8:3.* Then, miraculously, after the Scriptures have been opened and the bread has been broken the disciples see Him for who He is in this mystical encounter.

All of us are called to the *Table of Sacrifice* and in this context we gather to open the scriptures and break bread. Jesus, in this Luken passage, provides us with the essentials of our Sacramental Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, *"...it happened that, while He was with them at table ...He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them... With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him..."*

When we fully, consciously and actively participate in the celebration of Word and Sacrament, the Holy Spirit enlivens our spiritual senses and we recognize the Glorious Body of the Risen Lord. We, like the disciples on the road, are then called to rush out to share the good news.

In this week's Office of Reading, from the *Jerusalem Catecheses*, St Cyril wrote in 348 AD:

"May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul so that by contemplating the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, you may be transformed from glory to glory in Christ Jesus our Lord. To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

*When your children ask: What does this ritual mean?
Say to them: This is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover.
— Do this in memory of me, alleluia.*

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

That very day, the first day of the week,
two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus,
and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred.
And it happened that while they were conversing and debating,
Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.

He asked them,
"What are you discussing as you walk along?"

They stopped, looking downcast.
One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply,
"Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things
that have taken place there in these days?"
And he replied to them, *"What sort of things?"*
They said to him,
"The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene,
who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him.
But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel;
and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place."

"Some women from our group, however, have astounded us:
they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body;
they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels
who announced that he was alive.
Then some of those with us went to the tomb
and found things just as the women had described,
but him they did not see."

And he said to them,
*"Oh, how foolish you are!
How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!
Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things
and enter into his glory?"*

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,
he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures.
As they approached the village to which they were going,
he gave the impression that he was going on farther.
But they urged him, "Stay with us,
for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over."

So he went in to stay with them.
And it happened that, while he was with them at table,
he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them.
With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him,
but he vanished from their sight.
Then they said to each other,
"Were not our hearts burning within us
while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?"
So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem
where they found gathered together
the eleven and those with them who were saying,
"The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!"
Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way
and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

The Gospel of the Lord