

# Father John's Gospel Reflection



## Gospel

### **GOSPEL – SUNDAY, 30 APRIL, 2017 – THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER** (Luke 24:13-25)

***They recognised him at the breaking of the bread.***

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at the table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen, and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## Reflection

### **GOSPEL REFLECTION – SUNDAY, 30 APRIL, 2017 – THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER** (Luke 24:13-25)

Like the disciples, Cleopas and his companion (some commenters claim it could be his wife) fled Jerusalem, dejected, scared and perplexed. They walk with sadness and gloom, frustration and doubt. In the middle to this comes this "he" - Jesus himself. The original Greek words used denote Jesus' personal interest and availability. He comes to turn their sadness into joy and their expectations into reality.

There follows an interchange between Jesus and the two. Question and answer - back and forth. Together, Jesus and those two on the road, explain to one another the significance of the scriptures. Note how again (v20) in this story, it is the claim that it is the Jews and not the Romans who are responsible for the crucifixion. The idea that the Messiah should suffer (v26) is not part of the general Jewish messianic view.

I see here a parallel between the structure of this story, and our celebration of the Mass. Both begin with a reflection on the Scriptures and move then to the blessing and breaking of the bread. For here, as at Mass, we have believers gathered together, and the Lord comes to us. The resurrection narratives present Jesus coming to us in various ways, using different people and events to reach us and to teach us. Here, the revelation comes when "he blessed and broke the bread" (v31). As in Acts 2:34 and I Cor 10:16 revelation is connected with the fellowship meal.

Finally, the two return to Jerusalem, passing on the Good News for the benefit of others, building up and encouraging one another - this is such an important ingredient for our lives as believers. Supporting each other, so that the impact of discovering who the Lord is for oneself is not kept for one self, but to be with enthusiasm shared with others.

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1. It is on our own journey with others, that we are likely to realise that Jesus is walking with us - He is our companion on the way!
2. With the perception of his presence, through Scripture, let us walk with him, talk with him, depend on him, and listen to him.
3. Let us share this good news with others - bringing hope, joy, and happiness into our church community.

## Take home Message