

## **Homily : 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter**

- Our Gospel reading this Sunday begins with the words *“The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way, and how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread”*
- This Sunday’s Gospel is a continuation of the Road to Emmaus resurrection story we read two weeks ago right after Easter Sunday. These passages tell the story of two dejected disciples of Jesus heading back to Emmaus after the crucifixion of Jesus.
- Today’s passage continues the story of the two disciples who encountered the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus. The experience of the risen Lord could not be contained and the two returned to Jerusalem to tell the eleven that they had seen Jesus.
- In the midst of their conversations, Jesus appears, offering peace. The disciples were terrified thinking that he was a ghost. While Jesus let them touch him, they were still in disbelief and did not recognize him until after he shared a meal with them and spoke the words that helped them to understand the scriptures.
- This part of the Emmaus story emphasizes the physical reality of the resurrected body of the Lord. In today’s story the disciples touch him; they can see the marks of the wounds in his hands and feet and eat with him. He is no ghost!

- It was the Risen Christ who opened the minds of the apostles to understand the Scriptures. Christ was with the two on the way to Emmaus, He was with the early disciples and He is with us today!
- Today' s Gospel reading ends with the words: *“You are witnesses of these things.”*
- Jesus commissioned the disciples to be witnesses to his resurrection. To tell the world about the love of God. To show the world the love of God. To remind the world sin and death have no power over us – if we follow Jesus!
- The Emmaus story is our story too. It speaks to the different ways we encounter Christ, especially at the Mass. It speaks to what we are called to do after that encounter, how we are to live our lives as followers of Jesus.
- I think the Emmaus story gives us two important lessons about our lives as followers of Jesus.
- First, we are all travelling along a road –just like those early disciples. Our life with Christ is a journey, isn't it?
- The Emmaus story tells us *we are meant to journey together. We need each other.*
- We need each other's love and support. We need each other to think things through; to give advice; to share our joys; console each other in our disappointments and sorrow. We need each other to bring each other Christ's love.
- You know when those disciples first met that man, on the road; they saw a stranger, not realizing they were in the presence of Jesus. Our lives are not that different.
- We often forget that many times Jesus comes to us in the presence of others.

- So as this Easter season continues, ask yourself this: Who in your life is bringing you the love of Christ? Who is Jesus acting through to let you know He is there? Letting you know He cares? Maybe someone close to you – friend, family. Maybe even a stranger.
- We are meant to journey together. Wouldn't our journey be lonely, our lives empty without friends, family, fellow parishioners.
- Yet there are people who are journeying alone right now – at least they feel they are. There are many lonely elderly, sick and homebound. Many struggling with anxiety and depression.
- It is so important as Christians to find them and reach out to them and bring the love of Christ to them.....we are meant to journey together.
- The second lesson from the Emmaus story is a lesson on how to deal with disappointments and setbacks. Our Gospel reading shows us that death and life are closely linked, but life has the last word.
- There will be disappointments on our journey – it is unavoidable. Did you ever have your heart set on something? Were you ever so sure of something and then it doesn't happen – doesn't work out as you thought?
- Then you know how those early disciples felt. They were disappointed to say the least. We find them walking *away from Jerusalem* – the place their hopes and dreams were supposed to come true. “ They were hoping He would be the one”, the Messiah, who would establish His kingdom, free Israel from the oppressive Roman rule. Instead, they were walking away from their dreams; downcast, feeling all was lost.
- But what happens? On the day those disciples gave up hope, turned their back on their dream, went off

downcast – on that very day, Jesus rises and goes to be with them. And that changed everything – set everything right again!!

- What is the lesson for us? When we encounter disappointments and setbacks on our journey, it is normal feel downcast, confused even hopeless (like those disciples felt) – its part of being human. But...
- Then remember, Jesus is there - waiting for you. Go to Him. Let Him in like those disciples did – invite Him to stay. Meet Him in those around you; find Him in scripture; meet Him in the Eucharist – He is there in all those places.
- He is there to help us see the disappointment differently. To see the setback not as an end but as a new beginning – just like His crucifixion.
- The road may be different, even difficult, but in each disappointment and setback in our life the Lord reminds us this: It is a journey, there is lots of road left to travel. I am with you. Remember who you are. I made you; I love you. You have great value. Setbacks don't define who you are or change your essence. I am counting on you for the most important job on this journey – bring my presence, my love to the world.
- *“You are witnesses of these things.”*