

Easter #3

4/26/2020

Luke 24:13-35

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Celebrate (Introduction) “Today’s gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ was with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord’s day.”

Opening Hymn: “Praise, My Soul. The God of Heaven”

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

I love the Lord, for he heard my voice;
he heard my cry for mercy.

²Because he turned his ear to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.

³The cords of death entangled me,
the anguish of the grave came over me;
I was overcome by distress and sorrow.

⁴Then I called on the name of the Lord:
“Lord, save me!”

What shall I return to the Lord
for all his goodness to me?

¹³I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his faithful servants.

¹⁶Truly I am your servant, Lord;
I serve you just as my mother did;
you have freed me from my chains.

¹⁷I will sacrifice a thank offering to you
and call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people,
¹⁹in the courts of the house of the Lord—
in your midst, Jerusalem.

Praise the Lord.¹⁹

Hymn of Praise: [“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”](#)

Prayer of the Day

O God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: [Acts 2:14a, 36-41](#) “Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed (the crowd.)”

2nd Reading: [1 Peter 1:17-23](#)

The Gospel: [Luke 24:13-35](#)

Hymn of the Day: [“Let Us Break Bread Together”](#)

The Message (Video Link):

Many people enjoy the out-of-doors by taking walks. Walking not only slows down the rapid pace of life but it is also a good way of physical exercising. During this time of isolation and social distancing many have discovered the joy of walking and observing the world around them in a totally different way. This is because in many ways our minds are not cluttered with the vigorous demands of our normal busy pace of life which can block out our surroundings. All too often this means that we pay very little attention to the people who happen to cross our paths. During this time of Isolation we now long for the presence of other people whether friend or stranger.

This may lead us to view the gospel reading from Luke in a much more understanding way. On that third day after the crucifixion, we are told two of Jesus' disciples or followers (not of the original twelve disciples) were walking on the road to the village of Emmaus. This was some seven miles from Jerusalem. Walking along they were busy in conversation when Jesus came

near and walked with them. Luke relates "... their eyes were kept from recognizing him." Upon Jesus' inquiry about their conversation, He was told about what had occurred over the past several days and about their hoped for messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Clearly they seemed to be highly emotional in their despair and personal crisis. They concluded by giving the account of the women about the empty tomb. Jesus then answered, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" He then continued to explain all the prophecy and scriptures which confirmed His life as the Messiah.

Upon the disciples' invitation Jesus went with them to spend the evening. While they were around the mealtime table, "... he took the bread, blessed it and gave it to them," At this moment they recognized the stranger and at that moment He vanished from their sight. They had seen the risen Christ and went on to tell the eleven that very night. This is an amazing story in that the two followers didn't at first recognize the apparent stranger walking with them. After all even though the women had told them about the angels' message about the resurrection, they still were captive to their emotions. Therefore, it never occurred to them that he was actually Jesus It wasn't until they sat at the table and Jesus shared the bread, which is an act of love, did they realize they were in the presence of the risen Christ. This is not only a verification of the sacrament of Holy Communion but also that the reality of Jesus can be found in our reaching out to others with love.

"One of my favorite short stories is by Leo Tolstoy, "Where Love Is, God Is." The entire story is too long to read to you now but I will read an internet summary of that famous story as found in Wikipedia.

"Where Love Is, God Is" is a short story about a shoemaker named Martin Avdeitch. The story begins with a background on Martin's life. He was a fine cobbler as he did his work well and never promised to do anything that he could not do. He stayed busy with his work in his basement which had only one window. Through this window he could see only the feet of people. He was still able to recognize most people by their shoes as he had worked with most of the shoes at least once. He had a wife, but she died, and all their children had died in their infancy except a three-year-old son.

After he thought about sending him off to live with his sister he decided to care for the child himself. Martin however, was not destined to have a child as his son died a few years later with a fever. In grief, he denied God, wondering how He could allow such a thing to happen to him. One day a missionary visited Martin and Martin told him of his hardships. This missionary told Martin that he should live his life for God and not deny Him because God's will is the ultimate deciding factor and as humans we cannot question that. The missionary's words sank deep into Martin. After this encounter Martin went out and bought a large print Testament.

He began to read the Bible, at first only on holidays, but as he read more and more it became daily. His life became full with peace and joy. After his day of work he would sit down with a lamp and read. One night Martin read a passage about a Pharisee who had invited Jesus into his

house, and in the house a woman anointed and washed Jesus' feet with her tears. Martin thought of himself as the Pharisee in that story as he was only living for himself. As Martin slept he thought he heard the voice of God telling him that He would visit him the next day.

The next morning Martin skeptically watched out his window for God. While he was searching for God he saw Stepanitch shoveling away snow. Martin invited him in for a warm drink and they talked for a while. Martin told Stepanitch about Jesus' and the Pharisee and Stepanitch was moved to tears. Stepanitch later left and thanked Martin for the food, both for the soul and body.

Martin later saw a young woman outside with a baby not properly dressed for the cold. He invited her in for some food and gave her warmer clothes and money. Martin also told her about Jesus and she thanked him and left. Then he saw a young boy stealing from an older lady. He went outside and settled their argument as he extended love and compassion towards the both of them.

That night while Martin wondered why God had not visited him, the three figures appeared in his home, who he had showed hospitality to that day. They said that when he helped them he was helping God. Martin then realized that God had indeed visited him, and he accepted Him well."

During this time when our contact with others is extremely limited there still are opportunities to extend our love to those who are in need. It may be a telephone call, an email, or other internet means or even a card or letter. We can always give to those who are in need of food. Whenever we get the opportunity, a "thank you" to those who are placing themselves in danger in order to save the life and well-being of others can mean so much. This is a window into experiencing the act of God loving presence. It is during times of difficulty, sacrifice, and crisis that we can experience God's presence among us through the sharing of love. God has not abandoned us He is there for us through every act of love we are privileged to witness or perform as did Martin the shoemaker. It is then we can relate to the Psalmist's words, "I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations."

The Anthem: "You Raised Me Up" Agne Giedraityte

You Raise Me Up

Josh Groban

When I am down, and, oh, my soul, so weary
When troubles come, and my heart burdened be
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence
Until you come and sit awhile with me
You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be
You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I...

The Offering*

"We give thee but thine own, what-e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust,
O Lord, from thee."

The Prayer:

God of comfort and love, during this time of uncertainty and isolation we need your presence as we walk through each day. Give us the will and strength to reach out in love to others who are in need of a loving word and encouragement. We know that your presence will be within the love which we share and which is shared with each other. We give you thanks for the many who are giving of themselves so that others may live. They are truly your presence within these troubled times. Keep us in your loving care.

Reach out and touch us with your blessing, We especially seek healing and comfort for , Pam Ash, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, Billy Jean Eddy & family, the Elshafei family, Betty Fultz, Darrell Garrison, the John Family, Ray Lambert, Donna Mayhew, Bev and Jim Mertz, Nic Nelson, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Terre Rones, Paul Sagal, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Tommy Shimer, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Linda Stephens, Randy Stephens, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Pastor Jack, and all those who are suffering fear anxiety, pain, and sorrow as a result of this pandemic. Be especially near to the Honey family upon the death of our fellow member Al and to Kristen and the Fallon family upon the loss of a grandmother, mother, and wife Nancyeve. Surround them with your comforting presence. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you;
The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen.

And now my brothers and sisters
Live on knowing God's love,
The joy of living this life of love,
And the peace which only come through the power of His presence within you.

So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: "O Master Let Me Walk With Thee"

*Offering to be sent to:

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http://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org/who_we_are.html: