

# THE APPEARANCE ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Dear Parishioners,

St. Luke's post resurrection narrative of the disciples on the road to Emmaus defines the meaning of our ecclesiology; how we see ourselves as church, and demonstrates the process by which we come to understand and discover the presence of Jesus in our human experience. It also provides a paradigm for the process of education and teaching.

The disciples are discussing the events of the past few days. Jesus draws near and asks them what they are talking about. Their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. Jesus listens to their story, and then shares his story.

Jesus gives the impression that he is going down the road beyond Emmaus. The disciples invite him to stay with them, "it is nearly evening." While at table with them, he took the 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 say to each other, "were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures for us?" They get up and go to Jerusalem to tell the eleven what had happened on the road, and how they had come to recognize him in the breaking of the bread.

Like Jesus we need to enter the lives of others and be ready to listen to their stories. Then we can share our story. Then we need to allow people to reflect and discover for themselves what we have shared.

Luke tells us that Jesus is experienced within the faith community, in the sharing of scripture, and in the breaking of the bread. When we recognize Jesus in the word and in the breaking of the bread, we go out to spread the news of what we have seen and heard and experienced.

Too often we try to push our words on people, without knowing their story, or even wanting to take the time to listen. We also find it hard to back off and allow others to reflect and discover for themselves.

Real education does not simply fill people with knowledge but encourages them to reflect on their lived experience. After we have shared our story, we need to allow them to discover the moment of truth for themselves.

During this time of social distancing and illness, we, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, are so caught up in our own thoughts and concerns that we might not recognize the presence of Jesus in our lives or in the people around us.

We need to listen to each other, and then we need to share our story of faith and the scriptures. Reaching out to others does not mean running them over. Like Jesus we need to know how to step back and allow others to discover him in their own time.

We all long for the day when we can come together to share our stories, listen to God's word, and share and recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread at Mass. We can do that now in prayer, in breaking bread at our own tables, and by patiently listening and supporting others.

Thank you for your prayers, support, and expressions of concern. Msgr. and I continue to remember you in all our prayers and Masses. Let us continue to meet for Mass on our parish website.

**FATHER GAGNE**