



Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Easter (A)
April 23, 2023

He Will Walk You Home

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

It was a very simple encounter. Two people, possibly husband and wife, on their way home from Jerusalem to a neighboring village, are joined by a lone traveler walking on the same path. The couple was downcast for some reason, and the lone traveler showed interest and concern. It was nothing out of the ordinary, just simple human interest. However, it's often just such an unexpected situation that becomes a profound event of God.

Jesus was talking beside them, explaining their sacred writings, and

they did not recognize him. What would it take for them to realize the identity of their companion? As he appeared to continue his journey, they offered him hospitality: "Stay with us" (Luke 24:29). Though they didn't understand who he was or everything he had said to them, their hearts were open to him and so he stayed. "At table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them" (Luke 24:30). That did it! Now they knew. "He was made known to them in the breaking of bread" (Luke 24:35).

This is another moving story about the past and the present. How often we fail to recognize Jesus in our midst. He is with us in the very ordinary events of life, like walking home or preparing a meal. He is there even in our misunderstandings and disappointments. When we realize this, our hearts burn within us. We begin to see that the entire world is a place of encounter. Every human action holds the possibility of revelation. †

Sunday Readings

Acts 2:14, 22-33

God raised [Jesus] up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it.

1 Peter 1:17-21

He was...revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory.

Luke 24:13-35

He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened.

***How often we fail
to recognize Jesus
in our midst.***

A Word from Pope Francis

Dear brothers and sisters, we are always journeying in life. And we become what we go toward. Let us choose the way of God, not of self... We will discover that there are no unexpected events, no uphill path, no night that cannot be faced with Jesus.

REGINA CAELI, ROME, APRIL 26, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Have I ever experienced our Lord in an unexpected encounter?
- Where do I least expect to find him today?

The Problem of Evil and God's "Silence"

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Why doesn't God make things easier? Perhaps the most vexing faith question of all time is the problem of God's silence and his seeming indifference. Why does God allow evil? Why do bad things happen to good people?

The presence of evil in the world poses a deeper question. Why does God seem to be hidden? If God is so massively real, why do so many people not recognize, acknowledge, or care about his existence? Why do believers have to live, almost always it seems, on the edges of doubt? Why doesn't God make his existence clear, a fact beyond doubt? Why doesn't God silence his critics?

Evil exists because God respects freedom, both in nature and in human beings. When we are confronted with the problem of evil in the world, the conclusion we might draw is not that God doesn't exist or doesn't care, but rather that God respects and values freedom in a way that we don't.

God doesn't make things easier because God can't make things easier, at least not without making us and the world into something far less than we are. When God made us, he gave us as much freedom, creativity, and spunk as was possible. He

didn't play it safe but gave us as much godliness as he could without making us into gods ourselves. Simply put, in making us, God went so far as to give us a freedom that even he won't tamper with. That's risky, but as a parent, it seems God would rather risk than control, allow creativity outside of his influence than limit ingenuity, and tolerate the misuse of freedom than relate to robots. God is perceived as silent because he allows human freedom and ingenuity to be precisely what they are meant to be: noncoerced, even by God. God is not a frightened parent who needs to control, nor a threatened creator who kept what was best back for himself. God allows evil because God respects the freedom and ingenuity of creation and, as we know from our faith, can ultimately redeem whatever goes wrong.

Things could only be simpler if God had made us Swiss clocks—wonderfully tuned to preset rhythms, with no mess, no sin, no evil, and the beauty of perfect crystal. But then there wouldn't be any love, freedom, creativity, or meaning. No. God built us on a razor's edge, so full of godly fire that we are capable of both martyrdom and murder. †



In the resurrection we are assured that there are no doors that are eternally closed. Every time we close a door, or one is closed on us, God opens another for us. The resurrection assures us that God never gives up on us, even if we give up on ourselves, that God writes straight with the crooked lines of our lives, that we can forever revirginize, regain lost innocence, and move beyond bitterness.

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, when we fail to recognize you in friend or stranger, in familiar or foreign, please open our eyes of faith, we pray. Amen! Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 24–29

Monday, Easter Weekday:

Acts 6:8–15 / Jn 6:22–29

Tuesday, St. Mark:

1 Pt 5:5b–14 / Mk 16:15–20

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:

Acts 8:1b–8 / Jn 6:35–40

Thursday, Easter Weekday:

Acts 8:26–40 / Jn 6:44–51

Friday, Easter Weekday:

Acts 9:1–20 / Jn 6:52–59

Saturday, St. Catherine of Siena:

Acts 9:31–42 / Jn 6:60–69

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