

Homily for Sunday Mass
Third Sunday of Easter
April 26, 2020
Year A – Luke 24:13-35
---Father Michael Grant George Cadotte---

The Gospel starts with those who believe but not fully understand and their journey towards the light through the teachings of scripture and its pointing to Jesus the Risen Lord. The reading ends with Jesus once again breaking bread and engaging in what will be the center of our Catholic faith – the Eucharist.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, we truly are on a journey just like the boys were on their way to Emmaus. In general, we have our all-encompassing life journey. In faith we have our personal journeys with God and Jesus Christ. And in these pandemic times we have an unwelcomed journey of dealing with COVID-19 and the many ways it has, and continues to, effect and affect our lives.

As we look at the various aspects of our lives through the lens of a journey our Gospel reading comes to life all around us. How? Jesus is walking with you! So, slide over on that couch, make room on the sofa chair because you and I know that God travels with us – yesterday, today, and tomorrow, God is there with you holding you up on the many journeys you find yourself on.

Now, it is easy for me to exclaim that, and I know that there are times that you feel afraid, alone, and distant from God. These feelings are real and nothing to be ashamed of. Remember our two disciples and how they had given up. They threw up their hands and said, “it is over” and walked out on the other 11. They saw their Teacher killed, they now see an empty tomb and appear to believe his body was taken and they simply were filled with dread and reached their breaking point. Their feelings of dread, abandonment, fear, and dashed hopes were real, just as real as those feelings you may struggle with today.

Fear – the go-to weapon of Satan in his never-ending effort to separate you from God. Note the order of that: you then God. God will never separate himself from you, and even when you separate yourself from God, God remains there waiting for you to come back.

Maybe your fear is not of a specific issue in your life but a belief that your life journey is not compatible with God and you have an underlying feeling of unworthiness. Again, God is always there to welcome you back – and in reading Luke’s Gospel specifically we can be reminded of this. Luke balances his Gospel writings with equal stories of both men and women, but this gender parallelism touches on a broader theme in the Gospel – that of Jesus reaching out to the disenfranchised, social outcasts, social fringe groups of the time including women, sinners, the lost, and the poor (11 times – more than Mark and Matthew combined).

Therefore, following the Gospel of Luke, if you find yourself born in a manner considered less than, you are good with God. If you are poor and have little to offer the Church or others, you are good with God. If you are at odds with some aspect of the Church, you are still good with God. If you have lost your faith and feel you cannot return, you can, as you are still good with God.

You may not see God and you may not even feel God working in your life, but I tell you friends, God is there. How do we know this? Let us look to Scripture for that answer:

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Joshua 1:9 "...Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Isaiah 41:10 "Fear not, for I am with you..."

Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and courageous...for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."

Matthew 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And finally, we have our last indirect Scriptural reinforcement from today's reading (LK 24:13-35) where Jesus is walking along side our two disciples on their way to Emmaus. Their fear and disbelief in what that saw blinded them to His presence, but he still journeyed with them, loved them, and even instructed them. Oh, how I wish Luke would have told us what those instructions were! Or maybe in Luke's wisdom he left that out of this story so that we seek God's Word for ourselves in our own time.

You should clearly see that God has promised to be with you along your journey in life. Jesus is there walking the proverbial road with you just as He did with our two disciples on their way to Emmaus.

Our Gospel started in Jerusalem with our two traveling disciples feeling low and dejected, but they return feeling great peace, awe, and wonder – but only after encountering the Risen Lord, His teaching of scripture to them and communion with Him. And that is the final aspect that gives us peace through the knowledge that Christ is always with us. He is with us in the Word and every time we come together and celebrate the Eucharistic Liturgy.

Now, I know that we are not physically together so I would like to end with this communion prayer and ask that you hold this in your hearts while we soon celebrate the Eucharist and continue to hold to this until we can celebrate the sacrament once again together:

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

AMEN