

Homily Resources 3rd Sunday of Easter, 04/26/2020
Readings: Acts 2, 14a, 22-28; 1 Pt 1;17-21; Lk 24:13-35

The disciples on the road to Emmaus

Basic point: At this time of struggle with COVID-19, how can we deepen our relationship to Jesus and have confidence that we can be with him in Paradise when we die? This encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus shows the progression of faith. This progression is the same as the order of the Mass; Teaching in the Liturgy of the Word and encountering Jesus personally in the Eucharist.

Let's start first with the Gospel Reading and analyze what was going on. Here we can see the events, what happened, but we must also think about the attitudes that allowed them to benefit from this encounter and finally be successful.

1. First, these two disciples were going home, leaving Jerusalem, discouraged and downcast.

What kind of discouragement Is it possible to be so discouraged that you won't listen to anyone? When Jesus asked them what was happening, were they willing to talk? Yes, they were. And they were willing to listen to someone who could really make sense. Do we always need to control our bad or negative feelings? If not, could we be cut off from any kind of help? What might be the consequences of that?

2. Jesus comes and encounters them. Note that they welcome him into their group. They are not closed to talking about what had happened to Jesus. They shared with him the pointedness of their discouragement. Many times when we are willing to share what really has us down, we can learn better how to deal with it. Was that the case with these two disciples?

3. Then he corrects them in an important way.

“And he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures (Gospel).

What attitude did they have when he corrected them bluntly? Can we sometimes just turn off a person who criticizes what we have done or what we have said? What are the consequences if we can't take and learn from criticism? How did these discouraged disciples take the correction?

4. They were not turned off by his correction, but continued walking with him and now listening.

What attitude does this show? They were willing to listen. Why would they listen when he was explaining from “the prophets” what the Messiah would have to undergo? Wouldn't we love to have a transcript of all he said to them? They listened and their hearts burned within them as they listened.

5. When they reached their home, they reached a critical point. Either they could let him go on or they could open their hearts and their home. Could they have been so upset by him that they wouldn't have wanted him in the house. And Jesus appeared to be going further, but they were considerate, generous, and hospitable. They invited him for supper and probably for security for the night. It was in the precious intimacy of that meal that Jesus took the bread, blessed and broke it and they recognized him. What attitude allowed them to recognize him? Do you think they had been around him before the crucifixion? By being familiar with what he did and how he did it, they were able to recognize him. Perhaps, because of their openness, their faith, their generosity, God then opened their eyes to realize who was really with them. So, we sometimes need to be open to receive the help of God to see clearly or understand a situation. Should we often pray to God for this insight or more understanding? Maybe a good summary of this attitude towards God is “to trust and obey.”

6. Does this not describe the journey of faith that each of us must take?

- a. Often, we are discouraged by the ways of the world apart from God.
- b. Then we need for someone to give testimony to what God is doing, testimony to Jesus.

- c. We must then be open to being corrected from our former ways of thinking. This is what Peter calls for in our second reading:

Beloved: If you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one's works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb.

- d. In order to understand that testimony we must have openness of heart to listen to, to understand and accept the testimony of God.
- e. Being open to inviting Jesus into our lives, at the most intimate level, represented by that hospitality to invite Jesus in for supper.
- f. The gift of faith to be open to recognizing Him when he makes himself known.

Does this not then illustrate that each of us, in order to receive the wisdom and presence of God, be willing **"to trust and to obey."**

7. **This, then, represents the journey that each of us can experience in every single Mass. I say "can" because even if in Mass, without the right attitudes we will not experience that journey.**
 - a. **First, we come in from the world, seeking the teaching and the presence of God.** Sometimes is it not that we are discouraged by what is going on around us and in the world and therefore do not come to Mass?
 - b. **We then prepare ourselves to be ready to receive the Lord in the Penitential Act.**
 - c. **We then anticipate the inspired teaching from God in the Liturgy of the Word, the preaching, the Creed and the Prayers of the People.**
 - d. **We then bring our gifts to God in the Presentation of the Gifts and in the preparation of our hearts to receive the Lord.**
 - e. **Jesus then comes to us in the Eucharistic Liturgy, where we recognize him in the Breaking of the Bread as did the Disciples.** This is accomplished by the priest. This brings Jesus to our very Altar in his Body and Blood.
 - f. **We, then, in the Communion, accept/receive Jesus into ourselves, the Bread of Life.** In order to be ready to do this, our lives must be in order, or we will be "eating and drinking judgment upon ourselves" (See 1 Cor 11:27-34).
 - g. **Finally, we are sent out against into the world, rejuvenated, to carry out God's will, with, again, that attitude of "to trust and to obey."**
8. **If we do this well, acknowledging the truth of who Jesus is and what he has done for us, summarized in Peter's preaching in the first reading, we will then have done what Peter called for in his second reading, having cleaned up the futility of our former lives by being obedient to the Word of God. Then we will have assurance of our salvation and can face any threats and fears in this life. A best summary of the Christian life that leads to assurance of salvation is "to trust and obey."**
9. **That this message about the Mass and the Eucharist is worthy of our trust and our obedience, in addition to the testimony of Scripture, is the existence of many Eucharistic miracles. Let me close by sharing one out of the life of our current Pope, Pope Francis. This entire story will be attached to this homily when it is sent out. This occurred to him when he was Archbishop Cardinal Bergoglio in Buenos Aires.**
10. **In this time of the COVID-19 Virus how important is it that we recognize Jesus. With this proof and this power are we willing "to trust and obey" so that we might recognize Him?**

