

Readings: Acts: 2: 14, 22-33, 1 Peter: 17-21, Luke 24: 13-35



Fr Michael says:

The Journey to Emmaus

In the richness of Easter we celebrate the Lord's Risen Life, as Peter does in the first Reading. The heritage we receive as Christians, which is won on our behalf by Christ, through the shedding of His Blood, is responded to in our own lives with wholeness and holiness. This message is conveyed to us in the Emmaus Story, which is a developed catechesis on the Eucharist and how it is celebrated: the extended Liturgy of the Word, lived during the walk to the village and sealed in the meal in the hostel, the breaking of bread: Jesus using the verbs that He used on Maundy Thursday: He **TOOK** the bread; He **BLESSED** it; **BROKE** it and **GAVE** it to them. The Story that we hear today is handed on, 50 or so **YEARS** after the events and it stresses the fact that Jesus is only truly known after the Word has been proclaimed and the Bread broken.

What has happened to the two disciples? They are in the depths of despair, as the one they accepted as Messiah had died a traitor's death! Who ever had heard of a Messiah who would allow such a thing to happen? They could not accept this! They were commiserating with each other as they walked, as Jesus joined them. They pour out their hearts to Him, He listened and it all came out. Communion is set up; trust and confidence grow, as He leads them to reality, through what the Scriptures say: that the Messiah would indeed suffer, die and enter into glory – we all need to follow this path, so Jesus' death is the way that this was done!

It was only when the whole experience was over that the Disciples understood what had happened: this is what happens to us all, as we journey through life. It can take a long time before it happens. Hence we need to reflect on what happens to us in our lives. We don't expect to find God in pain, but in joy – this is the great message given to the disciples – we have meaning in suffering - it does not go away, but our attitude towards it is changed. This gave them the courage to return to Jerusalem, after the meal, to resume their work and life with the Community. Our commitment is re-enforced.

Our lives have highs and lows, but they will all end in death, Jesus helps the disciples see how their lives mingle with His, He drew it out of them on the way and inspired them with His own story. The Resurrection of Jesus opens **ALL** our stories to the prospect of a glorious ending. We start and end our Journey in God!

To conclude with the words of St Augustine: "If you wish to have life - do what the disciples did. They offered Him hospitality. The Lord looked set to continue His journey, but they detained Him. At the end of the journey they said to Him: 'Stay with us, for the day is spent.' The Lord revealed Himself in the breaking of bread. Hospitality restored to them, what lack of faith had taken away. So if you wish to recognise the Saviour, take in the stranger. Seek the Lord in the sharing of the bread."