

April 23, 2023: Third Sunday of Easter

Main Idea: We can find Jesus in the mundane, day-to-day tasks.

It had been three days since Jesus' death. This morning, women came from an empty tomb claiming to see angels. Their words indicated Jesus may be alive, but how could that be? If any held hope of Jesus' return, it would have included a grand spectacle, for sure!

But as two of Jesus' followers walked along, a quiet stranger walked alongside them. He listened before he talked. Then he shared with them what he knew—interpretations of scripture they had likely not heard before.

When the time came for them to part, the travelers implored him to join them for the night. They sat together, blessed their bread, and shared it. Only then did they recognize that the stranger they had been walking with was Jesus! Immediately they realized that their hearts had been burning throughout their journey. They had recognized him, sort of, but didn't realize it until they ate together.

Jesus could have returned with armies of angels, dazzling bright light (it wouldn't have been the first time), trumpets and choirs filling the sky. He could have conquered the world in a grand display of power and show. Instead, Jesus showed up in the most mundane of tasks: a meal.

How often we look for Jesus in grand spectacles. We seek large gestures of miraculous power. But Jesus doesn't only show in those transfiguration moments. Jesus wakes us up as we eat, as we walk, as we talk. Jesus becomes known as we share with one another, as we celebrate being in community. Sometimes we don't realize it until later. Sometimes we are blessed to recognize Jesus in the moment. Jesus is always there. We only need the eyes to see.

Scripture Summary

Two travelers walked a lonely highway mourning their friend, mentor, and teacher. One quiet stranger would change everything.



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While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them.

GOD'S WORD for Today

April 23, 2023

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First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,
³⁶Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” ³⁸Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” ⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Psalm: Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23

¹⁷If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. ²¹Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. ²²Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

¹³Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” ¹⁹He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” ²⁵Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. ²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.