

Acts 2:14a, 36-41  
Psalm 116:1-3, 10-17  
1 Peter 1:17-23  
LUKE 24: 13-35

*Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.* In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen.

Today's gospel reading comes near the end of Luke and is not mentioned in the other gospels.

It is the first day of the week, Sunday. This particular Sunday is the third day following the crucifixion. Two members of Jesus' inner-circle are walking and talking about everything that has happened. We know that they are part of the inner-circle by the things they recount in these verses.

The resurrected Jesus comes near to them, starts to walk with them, and asks them "What they are talking about?" They stopped and looked sad.

Think about this. Make it personal. You are taking a walk with a close friend following a very sad experience in your life and the two of you are going over the details. Think about it. When something sad happens in our lives, we play the details over and over. People ask us. "What happened?" And we repeat the story over and over. Maybe that helps us make it real or maybe it will never be real.

This account is the same thing: two close friends of Jesus are walking and talking. Then a man joins them and asks them about their conversation.

And they share with this stranger the condensed form of the previous three days.

They were close enough to Jesus to be present when the women returned from the empty tomb and reported the vision of angels saying Jesus was alive.

After they had shared their experiences, Jesus looked at them and called them foolish and slow of heart to believe.

But, that has been true Jesus' entire ministry. He kept telling his followers what was going to happen and showing them who he was. But they never fully understood.

They knew the scriptures – the Jewish texts or, for us, the Old Testament. Here again Jesus provides the specific interpretations beginning with Moses of all scriptures about himself. Hearing this did not open their eyes. They continued their walk listening to the stranger.

The gospel tells us as they got near to the village, Jesus walked ahead as if he was going on; but the men urged him to stay because it was almost evening.

A stranger on the road and they invite him to stay. This is where we should be thinking, as Christians, what would we have done?

There are certain messages within the Christian faith that should just pop up in our heads when situations occur. How are we supposed to treat strangers? Who are we supposed to welcome into our homes?

Does your head do that? Mine does. *When you do for one of the least, you are doing it for me.* As I step over a beggar sleeping on the street in Mexico. As I say “no” to someone asking for money, instead of buying them food. Sometimes I think our modern experiences get in the way of our Christian walk.

So, our two guys taking a walk invite a stranger in for the night.

And at dinner, as the stranger takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them, their eyes are opened and they recognize Jesus. Not in encounter on the road. Not when he shared the scriptures about himself. But in the breaking of the bread.

Then Jesus vanished and they looked at each other – “Weren’t our hearts burning while he was with us on the road?” And then they ran back to tell the others.

I think sometimes we have blinders on; we are so wrapped up in what is happening, or has happened, in our lives that we don’t see the bigger picture.

Each week, we have the opportunity to have our eyes opened to the presence of Jesus in our lives – in the scripture, in the sermon, in the blessing, in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the wine. But, just like the men on the road, many times our eyes are closed. We do something out of habit or because we are here or we don’t come to the altar rail because of other issues in our lives.

Jesus’ gift is to all of us and is available here every week. All we have to do is receive it.

Here at St. Barnabas is a wonderfully opened and affirming experience of Christian community and love. So many of us come from different backgrounds and different understandings of the Bible; but we come forward, kneel next to each other, put out our hands, and share the gift Jesus gave to us all.

Each of us are these two men, we are all walking our life’s journey and our relationship with Jesus. Many times, we are so wrapped up in our own stuff that our eyes are closed.

When we come to church, we hear the story of Jesus’ life and death; it may be from our experiences as a child in Sunday school or as an adult finding Jesus again.

We each must let our eyes be opened to the scripture, to the sharing of the word, to the blessing breaking of the bread. Jesus is here. Look around.

Let us hear the collect for today again:

O God, whose beloved Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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