

## Emmaus – A Journey to Faith

Third Sunday of Easter – Luke 24: 13-35-April 30, 2017

My First Holy Communion was at St. Mary's Church in Iowa City. I remember my white dress which my mother had made. I remember how the rubber band under my chin (that held my veil onto my head) was cutting into the skin of my neck. I remember that it was a very cold spring day which caused most of us in the Communion class to shiver and shake as we waited to begin the grand procession into church. I remember sitting (without my parents) in row upon row of children waiting through the Mass to receive Jesus for the first time. What I don't remember is the very moment that I received Jesus' body. It happened but I don't remember. Some 55 years later, I can look back on that day with a better understanding of the gospel for this week. The road to Emmaus is not a moment in time but a journey to faith in Jesus Christ.

It has taken me a lifetime to appreciate and to continue to embrace what took place on that very cold Sunday morning in May of 1962. My First Communion was important but it is not any more important than the communion I celebrate with each of you throughout the year. What is important is that I know I'm still on the journey. I am still on the road to Emmaus, searching for and looking for what those two disciples were searching for on that first Easter morning.

**"That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him."**

These two disciples were fleeing the fear, anger, bitterness and disappointment of the crucifixion. They had put their faith into Jesus as the promised Messiah. They believed he would deliver them from the Roman persecution. What happened was that he died. And they are done. They are leaving town, "getting out of Dodge". They can no longer see Jesus as the one to deliver them. In fact, they don't recognize Him in their initial encounter. They don't believe the other disciples who are telling them that the Lord has risen.

Throughout my life I have had days like this when I feel as if everything I believe or had hoped for has been "crucified". In my mind, Jesus has not shown up to save me. I have lived with fear, anger, bitterness and disappointment waiting for God to wave His magic wand. But there is no fairy tale. There is only the promise of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus responds to the two disciples (and to us) with these words: **"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?"**

On this journey to faith, we are called (as were these two disciples) to study the scriptures, to understand that Jesus had to suffer and that we, as His disciples, must suffer as well. The cross is the only way to salvation. We are then called to celebrate the Paschal Mystery, the passion, death and resurrection each and every week in the Eucharist. In this memorial action it is with great hope that each of our hearts will burn as we recognize Him in the breaking of the bread on our journey to faith.

Happy Easter!



Sue Schettler