Third Sunday of Easter  
April 26, 2020

READ
Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-33
Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11
1 Peter 1:17-21

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?”  
– Luke 24:32

REFLECTION
Because of Christ, we have no option but to see things differently. It becomes impossible for us to see others and the world without encountering the Risen Lord. This is especially evident in today’s Gospel. At first, the disciples could not distinguish their new traveling companion from any other person journeying from Jerusalem. Even after lengthy conversation, the disciples still were unable to recognize the Risen Christ. It was not until Jesus took bread, blessed it and shared it that the travelers could truly see who they were with.

But what do we see? The evangelist Luke brilliantly writes thee lines, influenced by the Holy Spirit, of course! Notice which details Luke includes, as well as what is left out. Luke writes that there were two people traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, including a man named Cleopas. But who is Cleopas traveling with? Is it his wife? His son? His daughter? Are the travelers childhood friends, or did they meet recently? Is one a student and the other a teacher? How old are they? What are their professions? What do you see in this story? What do you choose to see? And, perhaps more importantly, what did you not see?

ACTION
As you go through today, try to take notice of everything you see. Then, at the end of the day, think about all the things that you did not see or take notice of. As you reflect, think specifically about what God might be calling you to see differently.

REFLECT ON THE WORD
This is a unique encounter with the Risen Christ that we only find in Luke’s account of the Gospel! This reading sets the stage by letting us walk with the two disciples who are leaving Jerusalem via the road and to Emmaus.

Why are they leaving Jerusalem?

They are discouraged by the terrible events that took place there: the crucifixion of Jesus; the loss of their beloved teacher. And long comes the Risen Christ, yet “their eyes were prevented from recognizing him” (Luke 24:16).

Why don’t they recognize Christ, their beloved teacher?

Can you think of a time in your life when you felt that Christ was not with you?

What makes it difficult to recognize Christ in your daily life?
Next, Jesus asks the disciples what they are talking about. They describe to him the events of his own death, and the women’s incredible discovery of the empty tomb and appearance of the Risen Christ.

Why does Jesus ask them about these happenings in Jerusalem?

He already has the answers; he knows what happened. Perhaps he asked this question in order to set up his response: he breaks open the Word for them, beginning with Moses and the prophets, interpreting Scripture. After this, the disciples arrive at their destination, yet Jesus gives the impression that he will continue on the road. However, the journeying disciples beg Jesus, “Stay with us.”

Why do you think Jesus gave the impression that he was continuing on the road? Was he pretending with the disciples?

Finally, Jesus dines with the disciples. He takes bread, blesses it, and breaks it, giving it to them – and their eyes are opened! They recognize him, but he then vanishes. It is notable that Jesus is made known to these travelers in the breaking of the bread. In our Catholic faith, we too believe that Christ is really present when we gather at the table and break bread together in Mass. This is why the sacrament of the Eucharist is so important – it is the “source and summit of the Christian life” – and why we are encouraged to reverence and respect the bread and wine at Mass; because, after the Eucharistic rites, we believe that it is more than bread and wine – it is the Risen Christ (glorified body), present with us!

Do you recognize Christ in the Word, in the Eucharist, in yourself, and in others?

How is this similar to or different from your experience of dining with your family?

This Gospel story brings to light our ability to encounter Christ in the Word, in the Eucharist, and in walking with one another. Christ accompanies us on our journeys, walks with us, like he did on the road to Emmaus. We too are called to recognize Christ in the other, as well as to strive to be Christ in a special way through our words and actions toward one another. Sometimes, we may have trouble recognizing Christ in the other – much like the two disciples in this narrative. However, the simple act of walking with another is a step toward the call to recognize and be Christ for another.

**ACT ON THE WORD**

The Emmaus Walk

The Emmaus Walk is an activity that encourages us to walk with one another as if they are Christ – in other words, we recognize Christ in the other person. Go for a walk with a *household member(s)* for 15 – 20 minutes:

- Have you ever experienced your heart burning like the disciples?
- Where do you most often encounter Christ?
- What do you think being Christ for another person looks like?

God of all that is good, all that you have provided us can radiate your presence if we see with the eyes of faith. Help our eyes to be opened and our hearts to be burning as we come to know you in Word and sacrament, in the stranger and in ourselves. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.