

Homily (notes) from Canon Philip Dyson 23rd April 2023 - 3rd Sunday of Easter

Readings (Year A): 1st: Acts 2:14,22-33. 2nd: 1 Peter 1:17-21. **Gospel:** Luke 24:13-35

It is surely an understatement to say that so many people across the world are disillusioned. There seems to be so much happening everywhere, and wherever it is it brings huge unrest in so many areas of life. We do see and hear so much with modern communications.

Equally, and as ever, our faith has the answer.

The Easter stories are about encounter, meeting the risen Jesus. The two disillusioned disciples leaving Jerusalem are accompanied by a fellow traveller, unknown to them at the time. We know, as they did later, it was the Risen Jesus walking with them.

The story unfolds in three stages, and these stages correspond to vital parts of the Christian life, and the source and summit of our faith, **The Mass**, and its importance for Catholics since that Emmaus walk.

The hope that they had cherished hasn't been fulfilled. But because they are still talking to each other about their disillusionment, the Risen Christ can enter into conversation with them and interpret their experiences in a different way.

On our way through life we will often have a similar experience. We will become disillusioned. The illusions we had about life collapse. For whatever reason we want to walk away, indeed we know only too well so many do, as we've experienced since Covid.

But as long as we talk with one another, Jesus, the Risen One, will go with us, and disclose the meaning of life to us.

As it was with Jesus, only through tribulations do we attain true life, the glory that God has prepared us. **The Cross is central to all life.** Jesus interprets the whole of the holy scriptures to the two travellers. He shows them that his death and resurrection are the summary of the whole Bible.

All the sayings about the God who redeems and saves, the God who leads us out of the pit, who frees the enslaved people, who saves us from distress, reach their fulfilment in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

That second stage of the journey Jesus sets their hearts on fire as he explained the scriptures to them. The Scriptures are always a vital part of any sacrament.

Their hearts were warmed. If a person's mental intake is chiefly from the bad news which the mass-media sensationalise, is it any wonder that there is so much sadness, depression and inability to cope with the pressures of life.

There is nothing from which God cannot save us. God has raised Jesus from the dead. So God will lead us from darkness into light, from the tomb to life, from rigidity to liveliness, from imprisonment to freedom, from blindness to sight, from paralysis to walking, from legalism to love. All there in the scriptures.

What I can't fail to notice as people move away from the faith is that they are away from the scriptures. Hence more and more at important points of life people want poems or secular songs, not Bible readings and hymns.

And that is why it is important for us to leave very clear instructions for what we do want for those occasions for ourselves.

Opportunities do occur when we can walk alongside people and try to help them. Perhaps the greatest gift we can give to others is to help them recognise who they are in the loving eyes of God.

When we begin to glimpse the divine worth in other people we will act in love towards them. Christianity has always been a religion of loving action.

The third stage of the journey: Stay, abide with us they say: and he did and they recognised him in the breaking of bread.

“Stay with us, Lord.

The risen Lord is with us on the road to our Jerusalem.

We reach out to him through the people who journey with us.

We listen to him through hearing and reading the scriptures.

We celebrate his living memory at the Eucharistic table.”

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