

Wednesday's Gospel: In the Breaking of the Bread

Gospel for Wednesday in the 1st
Week of Easter, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 24:13-35*)

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to

them, “What is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?”

And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; and they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of

angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said; but him they did not see.”

And he said to them, “O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further, but they constrained him, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened

and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?”

And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, who said, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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Commentary

In the Easter season, we once again accompany Cleopas and the other disciple on the road to Emmaus during their dialogue with their unknown companion. The vivid

details of the story make it easy for us to join in, and we discover that each of us has at some point in our life been Cleopas. Memories of a happier past and unfulfilled hopes may have led us to become sad, with a sense of being defeated. We may have failed to rely on the author of Life, who gives meaning to our own life.

And Jesus comes to meet us, like the shepherd who goes in search of the lost sheep (cf. *Mt* 18:12). He has given his life for his sheep, and sees us as his friends. His Word has filled our hearts and we have believed in Him, and with humility even accepted his reproaches. He wants to save us at all costs, for “this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day” (*Jn* 6:39).

We marvel at how Jesus enters this scene with such great simplicity,

listening to the two disciples attentively while they explain to him the reason for their sadness. Then it is the disciples' turn to listen to him. And everything begins to change. Their sadness gives way to a burning ardor; they no longer see their fellow-traveler as a stranger but as a friend whom they want to stay with them. And when he breaks the Bread they recognize Jesus and realize that he is alive: that he is the Way, the Truth and the Life for his disciples. This is how our Lord wants to continue entering into our own lives, when we get lost in sadness and disappointment. And he wants us to do the same with our friends. Saint Josemaría, when considering this scene, liked to remind people that a Christian is also Christ passing by for his fellow men and women: "Every Christian should make Christ present among men. They ought to act in such a way that those who know them sense the "good aroma of

Christ” (cf. 2 Cor 2:15) and recognize the Master’s face in his disciples” (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 105).

Josep Boira

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