

Verses 13-14: On that same day... things that had happened.

Take some time to get into the story a bit further, so imagine you are walking, a seven mile walk, long enough to enjoy the rhythm of breathing and moving. Perhaps nothing is going the way you thought it would, both in the world and in your own life. There are things happening that don't seem to make any sense. Is there something in your life are you walking away from, something that is disappointing to you? Something you do not understand? One foot in front of the other, breathing in and breathing out. The rhythm of your walking invites its own meditation.

Verses 15-16 While they were talking...kept from recognizing him.

There is something about the way that Christ confronts us that is hard to recognize and unexpected. The ancients practiced the art of pilgrimage, the practice of leaving home for the sake of meeting Christ, for taking little with you so that wherever you went, you could share in life with whoever you met along the way. Food, drink and a place to rest, shared in common. In a sense we can do that each day, wherever we find ourselves in the course of a day, a metro station, the grocery store, our driveway, we can open ourselves to encounter Christ. Like Cleopas and his friend who are making the journey to Emmaus together, God will work not in isolation but in

and through shared experiences. Imagine Jesus entering into your journey with this friend.

Who is the friend that is walking with you right now? Perhaps, it is someone in your family, or someone you work with, or a friend who knows you well. How is God present to you as you share your questions?

Verse 17 And he said to them, ...they stood looking sad.

Imagine Jesus asking you, what are you talking about right now, what are the concerns that occupy your heart, how would you answer?

Verse 18, one of them said... are you the only one...there in these days?

Jerusalem is not only a geographic location, but a spiritual center. God's mighty acts in Jesus Christ happened within the walls of Jerusalem. Imagine being in the close circle of Jesus' friends, who had witnessed his miracles, fed the thousands in the crowds. Imagine having been one who was healed by Jesus only later to learn of his death. Imagine being one of those like Simon or Veronica who stopped to help him carry the cross and wipe his face during Jesus' day of deepest need.

What has been happening in your Jerusalem, in the center of your heart?

Verses 19-21...we had thought he was the one to redeem Israel?

The ancients believed the Messiah would come as a military ruler, that power would be given the nation of Israel. Jesus was not what they expected, he proclaimed peace and love and mercy rather than heavy handed rule. His grace was the fulfillment of the law. The world seems to hand out deep disappointments that don't seem to offer any new possibilities. Is there anyone who you can share your hopes and dreams with? Is God's redeeming love hard to understand, is it coming to you in a way that you would not expect? How is love being revealed? Write your thoughts down.

Verses 22-24 Some women amazed us...but they did not see Jesus.

The eyewitness accounts of the women at the empty tomb were all the disciples had to try to understand what was happening. We too, only have the eyewitness accounts of these same women. No Washington Post or NY Times, no internet, no facebook, no cell phone pictures were taken. The facts were simple, the tomb was empty and there was no sign of Jesus body anywhere. The women describe seeing angels telling them that Jesus was alive.

Not one person actually saw the resurrection take place.

Perhaps you acknowledge a kind of death that has happened in Jerusalem, in the heart of your own life or in someone close to you. Take a few moments to acknowledge the resurrection of Christ and consider what that means for your current situation.

Verse 25-27 How slow to believe...all the scriptures concerning himself.

It would have been hard to be one of the ancient disciples, the temple priests and officials, along with the government magistrates were not sympathetic to the experience of the disciples. The teachings of Jesus were controversial, he aligned himself not with those in power but with those who were powerless. Being a disciple, was a dangerous thing. There were many who did not understand or place any value on Jesus' life or his death and resurrection. Do you ever feel like you don't really "get it," that it seems there is too little evidence of the resurrection in our world? How are you slow to believe?

When scriptures are read, do hear the risen Christ?

How are scriptures being opened for you? Personal reading? Time spent in study with others? In worship? What conversations are you having that are revealing some truth for you?

Verse 28-29 As they approached... so he went to stay with them.

Is there someone who is sharing the truth with you, someone helping you sort out the deeper realities you are living. What new people and truths are you inviting into your life? Are you inviting Jesus to stay with you?

Verse 30 When he was at the table with them...

The Passover meal Jesus shared with the disciples in the Upper Room on Thursday before the crucifixion, was deep in meaning and shared with the gravity at all that was to take place. The breaking of the bread on the road to Emmaus is a moment of clarity and recognition of the Risen Christ and changes all our celebrations of the Lord's Supper to Easter joy. Companion and company words that are common in our households, in the latin roots mean simply, those who share bread. There is a vulnerability exposed in eating with others, sharing in the most basic of human needs invites an open acceptance at the table. In addition to the physical meal, love is shared at tables, and understanding, so in the very essence of breaking bread even at the family table lends a sacramental quality to all that is exchanged. While the sacrament the Lord's Supper in our church family is rich in its ability to nurture and sustain our faith through the mystery of the presence of the Risen Christ through the Lord's Supper, we do well to acknowledge the presence at Christ at our tables at home enriching us in love and mercy as well.

Where are the places you are most aware of God's nurturing and sustaining presence in your life? What are the things that help you to recognize him? Have you participated in a meal that seemed truly holy?

Verse 31-33 Then their eyes were opened...those assembled together...

When Jesus comes into our view, and we recognize Christ, it happens in fleeting moments. The risen Christ told Mary, do not hang on to me? We cannot hang on to Jesus either. The experience of Jesus in our lives may happen once, maybe many times. It is always a gift when we recognize Christ. The disciples ask, Were not our hearts strangely warmed? How would you describe those moments when God has been made real to you?

Verses 34-35 It is true! ...when he broke the bread.

The disciples return to Jerusalem, they return to the center of worship and fellowship. Their witness extends strength to the faith of the whole community. Imagine their joy! People who have a common memory share more deeply, and so it was for the disciples, and is for us today. How do we strengthen one another in our daily lives? How does our experience of God strengthen the lives of those around us?
