

Acts 2:14a, 36–41
Ps. 116:1–4, 12–19
1 Pet. 1:17–23
Luke 24:13–35

An Emotional Day

Focus on Luke 24:13–35

WHAT is important to know?

—From “Exegetical Perspective” by Donald Senior

The risen Jesus vanishes from their sight, and the two disciples leave immediately to return to the community in Jerusalem. Luke has driven home several of his characteristic themes: that Jesus’ death and resurrection are in accord with God’s plan of salvation; the dawning understanding of the community’s experience based on their reflection on the Scriptures and the inspiration of the Spirit of the risen Jesus; the breaking of the bread as a rich symbol of the community’s life and mission; the importance of not leaving the community but persevering with it.

WHERE is God in these words?

—From “Theological Perspective” by Molly T. Marshall

The promise of this text is that Jesus will meet his beloved “in the breaking of the bread.” The hospitality of the traveling companions becomes the doorway to grace. The willingness of the stranger to enter their space suggests trust and hope—and Jesus more than repays their convivial overture. Hospitality expresses deep vulnerability; welcoming a stranger is always risky, and the tables might be turned—for good or ill. It is not readily apparent who the guest really might be. Jesus becomes the host at this meal, which becomes an expression of thanksgiving and deepened faith. Eucharistic hospitality should emulate the expansive welcome portrayed in this text.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

—From “Pastoral Perspective” by Shannon Michael Pater

In a moment of tangible love that embraces the brokenness of betrayal and cross, the rays of Easter’s sunrise have illumined the crypt of their entombed hopes. Broken bread nurses our broken faith and can nourish the courage we need to leave our graveclothes behind and vacate the vault of our defeated dreams. The weary travelers feel alive; their hearts are renewed. The witness of the women at the empty tomb is now their testimony too. In the breaking of bread, the beams of resurrection’s dawn have reached about seven miles from Jerusalem. Their sacred city is made holy again, and their pilgrimage of faith has just begun.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

—From “Homiletical Perspective” by Cynthia A. Jarvis

“Revelation is the clue that enables one to put together the disparate experiences of life into a meaningful, coherent whole, to see a pattern and purpose in human history,” writes John Leith, “to overcome the incongruities between what life is and what life ought to be.” By word and sacrament, Christ opens the eyes of them who rejoice that they have reached their destination in him. Christ’s church has been making diligent use of his given means of grace since the evening of the first day of the week, in hopes that, on the way home, perhaps two in the crowd might even say, one to the other, “Did not our hearts burn this morning as the scriptures were opened to us!”

Luke 24:13-35 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” ¹⁹ He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” ²⁵ Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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