



LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 16, 2017

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 24:13-35

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.

DEVOTIONAL

In his first exhortation, Pope Francis wrote, "There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter." Surely that is how the two disciples on the road to Emmaus felt. Stuck in grief and disappointment, they couldn't believe the women's Easter news that Jesus had risen, so they pressed on toward a little town whose only noteworthy characteristic was how far away it would get them from Jerusalem.

But then they were ambushed by Jesus, and the result was joy like a consuming fire in their hearts. "Did not our hearts burn within us?" What exquisite joy awaits those who encounter the risen Savior! "Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads."

And notice where the encounter happens: on the road. The joy of Easter is not waiting for you to get to Emmaus. You won't find it in another town, another relationship, another degree, another car, another life. This joy is looking for you, impatiently, here and now, transforming whatever road you're on into a journey with Jesus that takes you "further up and further in" to heaven and so making every step an arrival. "So the ransomed of the Lord shall return." Amen!

PRAYER

Risen Jesus, restore to us the joy of your salvation. Meet us here, meet us now, and make our cup overflow with gratitude and rejoicing. Christ be in every eye that sees me, Christ be in every ear that hears me. Lord Jesus, increase in us, we pray. Amen.

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