

## Lenten Devotional March 31, 2024 (Easter)

### 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.*

### Devotion

#### Wendy S. Farone '20

Do you remember Easter morning when you were a young child? My family did not go to church so it never crossed my mind that connecting Easter with Jesus was a thing. Rethinking, we did go to church one Easter as I remember my sister and I had matching dresses. She wore a cute sailor hat with her ensemble and I wore a really ugly flowered one. The kids made fun of me; I built a resentment; so much for going to church on Easter.

We three siblings did have to wander around the house looking for our Easter baskets filled with candy and a big solid chocolate bunny. The excitement was in the seeking. The joy was in the finding and the moment I took that first bite of solid chocolate bunny ears, I believed in heaven!

I look back on those days with a smile and recognize how much of the meaning of Easter was missed in my youth. I believe that Jesus was there in my ignorance and lack of opportunity. At the time, as with the women who visited the tomb, "I did not see him." Jesus was there nonetheless in my laughter, my

fulfilled expectations, my gratefulness, and my faith that this year, we would have a basket of undeserved plenty.

I attend worship for four days in a row during Easter season. I cry at worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. I am solemn on Holy Saturday and on Sunday when the doors to the sanctuary are thrown open; the sights of the altar adorned with color and the smell of flowers on Easter Day overwhelm me, and I cry again. "Then [my] eyes are opened, and [I] recognize him." My heart burns "while he [is] opening the scriptures to us!" I seek to understand. I engage in the joy of the glorious gift of God's grace and mercy. The Lord offered his beloved Son to save us from our ignorance and lack of opportunity in order that we may see him clearly. And I know that I am in his presence. Thanks be to God!

### **Prayer**

Good and gracious God, how many times we did not see you when you were right there with us? How many times we settle for those things we believe that we should seek but discover that they are fleeting moments of a childish wish. Lord, our hope is in you; our hope of resurrection into eternal life. This Easter season may we remember the Lord has risen indeed. May we rejoice that "he has been made known in the breaking of the bread" now and forever. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.