**The Eucharist: Help to Our Emmaus Journey**

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Emmaus seems to have both political and religious significance before and during the time of Jesus.

* It is assumed to be a place where the Ark of God was before David moved it to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 6.
* Like such places of historical value, people still attach some importance to it in their lives. The journey to Emmaus was one into despair over the death of Jesus by the disciples. In Jesus, they saw the fulfilment of what Emmaus meant for them as a place of religious value. But when He was crucified, their hope was dashed so they had to go back to their old ways of life.
* Jesus who journeyed with them on the way back to old ways, brought them relief at the breaking of bread. They were brought back to faith in His resurrection.
* St Mary of Jesus Crucified, who lived from 1846 to 1878, is said to have seen a vision of the journey to Emmaus during her life time. St Mary who was a mystic and stigmatic is said to have the gift of floating during prayer. She was beatified by John Paul II in 1983 and canonized by Pope Francis in 2015.
* On the journey to Emmaus Jesus allowed the disciples to talk about their anxieties and pains; He let them grieve and mourn; He listened to them as they poured out their cries and doubts; He now used the Scriptures to make them better understand their suffering and the glory that awaits them.
* What does meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus mean for us today?

1st Reading: Acts 2:14, 22-33; gives a leverage of what journey to Emmaus means for humanity today. It is no longer a location, but a spiritual resource of encounter with the divine as we pass through the uncertainty of life.

* The disciples did not first recognize Jesus on the way to Emmaus, but at the breaking of bread, their eyes were opened. Jesus explained to them the reality as written in the Bible. He travelled with them from doubts to faith and trust in the word of God.
* Peter in this passage led the people from the Jesus of history to that of faith. The Jesus whose presence in our world has become more vivid, real and worth witnessing and dying for.
* “This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him. But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it.”
* At the preaching of St. Peter, many people came to believe and have tremendous faith in Jesus. They now own Him as their Lord and Redeemer. They left the level of fear to that of courage.

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-21; in this passage, St Peter calls us back from a futile way of life to a new way of life. Jesus has paid the costliest price for our redemption.

* He calls us back to what has been there even at the foundation of the world. He calls us to see the power of the fulfillment of the old law in the new love brought by Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.
* “He was known before the foundation of the world but revealed in the final time for you, who through Him believe in God who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

Gospel: Lk 24:13-35; is the real story of what took place on the way to Emmaus. When it was revealed to them at the breaking of bread, the disciples could not wait to tell the story.

* The response to the Psalm says: Lord, you will show us the path of life.” When we see the path of true life, we will always want to share the joy with others.
* The path of true life brings hope, exhorts, counsels, it gladdens the heart and rejoices the soul, it brings abiding confidence; and it does not abandon us to misery.
* “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!

The Emmaus story is a journey in which genuine hospitality brings fulfilment of prophecy, the recognition of the truth.

* In Emmaus, we are inspired through the Scripture, and we see the strength in the breaking of the bread.
* John Paul II: (In ***MANE NOBISCUM DOMINE “***Stay with us Lord, for it is almost evening”): “The*image of the disciples on the way to Emmaus* can serve as a fitting guide for a Year when the Church will be particularly engaged in living out the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Amid our questions and difficulties, and even our bitter disappointments, the Divine Wayfarer continues to walk at our side, opening to us the Scriptures and leading us to a deeper understanding of the mysteries of God. When we meet him fully, we will pass from the light of the Word to the light streaming from the “Bread of Life”, the supreme fulfilment of His promise to “be with us always, to the end of the age” (cf.*Mt*28:20).”
* Journey to Emmaus teaches us priorities of life, opens us up to prevenient grace, life in piety, growth through study, sanctifying grace, discipleship, Christian action, overcoming obstacles to grace, perseverance, and the value of the body of Christ.
* We are all invited to do our individual Emmaus journey in order to enhance the body of Christ.