

# Reflection



- Showing love
- Giving hope
- Bringing peace

The Church of St John & St Leonard

**Luke 24:28-35**

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

*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.*

In our last passage and reflection we followed 2 dejected disciples on the road to Emmaus, grief-stricken and confused at the death of Jesus. In his reflection David described the scene in which a seemingly irritating stranger intruded on their grief, making conversation with them about what was upsetting them, and then opened up the scriptures to show that Jesus' death was in fact fulfilment of the scriptures. This apparent stranger was in fact Jesus, but in their grief these 2 disciples had not yet recognised him.

Today's passage picks up where the last one left off. As David encouraged us in the last reflection, let's be open to hearing afresh the message of this familiar passage. At this juncture in the story the questions are left hanging in the air: will the penny drop? Will they realise that the apparent stranger is in fact Jesus risen from the dead? Will they finally understand their familiar scriptures to see that Jesus had to die and rise again? Now they arrive at their destination, but Jesus seems to be going on and it is getting dark. Will they miss this chance to see who he is? The seemingly irritating stranger has stirred something in them through his explanation of the scriptures. Somehow he is no longer so irritating, in fact they would like to hear more, and they encourage him to join them. Will the penny drop?

And then Jesus blesses and breaks bread and shares it with them. The breaking of the bread and the revelation of Jesus' identity go hand in hand in Luke's gospel. There had been questions about who Jesus was and then he broke bread and fed the 5000 and after that Peter recognises Jesus as the messiah. At the last supper Jesus broke bread – instituting the Eucharist – and thereby revealed that the messiah's mission involved dying for many. And now he breaks bread with Cleopas and his companion and the penny drops... they finally recognise him... they realise that he is then risen Lord Jesus.

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Almost at once Jesus disappears, and then they realise that their hearts had burned with them as he unfolded the scriptures, and the penny drops, what he had been teaching them finally clicks and they realise that just as he had explained, the messiah must die and rise again... and indeed he has. No longer dejected, they are full of hope and make their way back that evening to Jerusalem to tell Jesus' other followers that he is risen indeed, hallelujah!

We aren't able to meet and to break bread together or to share in the Eucharist – but when we finally can again, be expectant to meet God as we do. But what about now? We are separated and in a world which seems to have been turned upside down. Amidst our sense of loss, frustration, confusion and disappointment, can we, like these 2 disciples learn from our familiar scriptures, and in our case namely this passage? Jesus is right here with us, a companion for us despite our isolation. Do we recognise him with us? Are we open to hearing from him? For us, will the penny drop?

The Revd Phil Bryson

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