

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Apr 3rd 2024**

### **We were hoping...but**

The Emmaus incident is recorded only in the Gospel according to Luke. The two disciples who were crestfallen over the murder of their Master are now leaving Jerusalem. The risen Christ encounters them on their way, but they could not recognise him. It is good to remember the story of Lazarus, who returned from death but was the same as before he died. But the Risen Christ is in his Glorified form, and it is not merely returning to the previous form of life.

Emmaus represents the disappointments we face in life, which every disciple encounters in the course of life's journey. Disciples are necessarily the ones who hope, believe that things will be better and strive to bring justice and compassion to the world. But they can also be so easily disappointed and sometimes lose all hope for a way out. It was to such disciples that Jesus came, unrecognised but with a total understanding of their hopelessness.

Their dreams were shattered by the shame and humiliation of the cross, and they are now sad. How often have we been like those two on the road, uttering similar words: "We were hoping that He was the one to save us?" Now, those hopes are shattered. Similar things happen in our lives, too: We were hoping that the marriage would remain intact and the family be united. We were hoping that wars, violence and terrorism would have ceased. We were hoping that our children would remain with us at home and they would stay in the Church. We were hoping we would have better political and economic situations.

The disciples' hopes had been shattered. They had moved into depression, as happens when we face failures in life. The risen Christ goes in search of the ones who are walking away. He reminds them that he hasn't gone anywhere; rather, he walks with them all the time. By narrating this story, Luke was explaining the work of the Risen Christ in the Christian community ever since the resurrection event.

It is in the act of Breaking of the Bread that they recognised their Master. The explanation of the Scripture on the road and the Breaking of the Bread in the evening constituted that day's Eucharist. And that changed them. They would never be the same again.

When we encounter the Lord in the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Eucharist and with the assurance that he is walking with us and among those around us, we cannot be the same again.

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