



Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Easter (A)
April 26, 2020

Hope Rekindled

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Discouragement and exhaustion are familiar to many of us. When we are young, we are full of life, vigor, hopes, and dreams. But the challenges of life can lead us down rough and narrow streets with few exits. When a fresh hope—an opportunity or a new love—appears but doesn't pan out, we are even more discouraged than before.

The two disciples returning home were convinced Jesus was the Messiah, but it doesn't seem to be. Jesus isn't surprised by their dissolution. He catches up to them and takes an interest in their

story. When he asks, "What things?" they unburden their hearts, and Jesus listens and cares.

With their eyes blinded, they do not recognize their companion. Their faith is dead, their hope is dimmed, their love is cold. The mystery of the cross makes no sense without an experience of the resurrection. They simply can't understand why it had to be this way.

Arriving in Emmaus, their newfound friend needs to go on. But they insist, as should we in our prayer, "Stay with us!" We need God's presence to enlighten our faith, rekindle our hope, and ignite our love. Jesus accepts; there is nothing he wants more. He has promised to be with us, and we need to be with him. Jesus offers us his presence not for a moment but for an eternity.

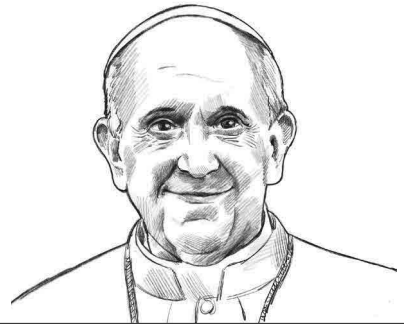
Imagine the precise moment of the disciples realizing who Jesus is. Meditate on what this moment says to you. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

We have all had difficult moments in life, dark moments in which we walked in sadness, pensive, without horizons, with only a wall before us. And Jesus is always beside us to give us hope, to warm our hearts and to say: "Go ahead, I am with you. Go ahead."

—General audience, May 24, 2017



Sunday Readings

Acts 2:14, 22–33

God raised [Jesus] up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it.

1 Peter 1:17–21

He was...revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory.

Luke 24:13–35

He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Am I discouraged with God in some area of my life? Talk through these areas in prayer.
- It was necessary that the Messiah suffer. Do I accept suffering? Am I willing to die with Christ to live with him?

Hang on to Hope When the World Is Falling Apart

By Jim and Susan Vogt



It's easy for all of us to feel overwhelmed and helpless in the face of many natural disasters, blatant injustices, and tragedies in our world. Are earthquakes, floods, and droughts worse than in the past, or are we more aware of them due to modern communication? Injustices tear at our hearts the most since they are under human control. Terrorism, corrupt politicians, oil spills, and pollution are mammoth problems of human making. Tragedies like death, divorce, or lingering illness can devastate us. We wonder: *How can God allow such suffering when we try so valiantly to do what's right and pray so hard?*

What's a Christian to do? Wallow in grief or guilt? Rail at God? Give up? Grieving is OK—for a time. Even getting angry at God is human. The psalms are good examples of people pouring out their grief and anger to God. (See Psalms 22, 55, 57, 88, 94, and 102 for a start.) Don't worry. God can handle our strong feelings.

There comes a time, however, when we have to pick ourselves up and carry on. The following actions have helped us when we've felt overwhelmed or powerless in the face of problems and evils in our world:

- **Cultivate gratitude:** Let go of your anger through consciously noting one thing each day for which you're grateful. When Susan starts fretting about the ills of society, she calls to mind that at least our home has electricity and running water.
- **Pray in solidarity:** Of course we pray, both personally and at Mass, for people affected by natural disasters and tragedies of all kinds. Adding our bodies to our prayers through fasting or other sacrifices can build solidarity with the victims and reinforce our prayers.
- **Take action:** Actions put feet on prayer. If you're already feeling overwhelmed and stretched, remind yourself that you don't have to eradicate poverty or war today—or alone. Can you take one action step in the direction of change? This won't solve the whole problem, but it gets you out of the starting gate.
- **Protect your sanity:** When making even one step feels like too much, you might be right. Sometimes we're truly maxed out and have to trust others and God to take care of a problem. Count what you're doing as contributing to society and call it "enough."

- **Think bigger:** Those of us with ordinary demands on our time, energy, and money have the responsibility to think bigger, to consider a second or third step. We must go beyond the human temptation to throw up our hands and say, "It's too big a problem. I can't make any difference." Consider that your strong emotion of anger or helplessness may be a call from God to act. You've been touched and moved.
- **Make a friend:** Whatever problem is touching your heart, there are probably others who have organized a group that's already working on it. Besides, having others to work with is motivating and can refine bigger ideas.

What's Faith Got to Do with It?

Jesus spent his life showing us how to deal with adversity and how to be neighbors. And what did it get him? Crucified! If we're following Jesus, we shouldn't expect comfort and ease. Rather, we need to spend ourselves for others and learn to love better. Jim McGinnis, a modern-day prophet and cofounder of the Institute for Peace and Justice, wrote: "In the face of escalating violence, let us escalate love." +



*Risen Lord, you walk with me
as my friend and companion.
Help me to recognize your
presence in all people.*

—From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of
Easter Through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 27–May 2

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 6:8–15 / Jn 6:22–29

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 7:51—8:1a / Jn 6:30–35

Wednesday, St. Catherine of Siena:
Acts 8:1b–8 / Jn 6:35–40

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 8:26–40 / Jn 6:44–51

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 9:1–20 / Jn 6:52–59

Saturday, St. Athanasius:
Acts 9:31–42 / Jn 6:60–69