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Easter 3
8 May 2011
Grace-Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wichita
Luke 24:13-35

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit

It's now Mother's Day,
at least that's what the calendar tells us – so happy Mother's Day.
We're two weeks after Easter,
and yet our Gospel reading says:
“No no no! ***That very same day***” (Lk 24:13)—
sorry moms, we're back at Easter again!

In fact, every Sunday, every Lord's Day is another Easter—
another celebration of the resurrection and the empty tomb!

And today we hear of two disciples walking along the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus.
We don't know much about them—
it's not so important—they're disciples.

And it's also important to know that they were, in a certain way, taking a walk of shame.
Their heads hung low,
they were angry, disappointed, ashamed, and sad—
all at the same time.

They really thought this Jesus was the one.
They thought He really was going to make a difference,
change the world,
free them from being the little guys—
but instead He was just another giant failure.

The chief priests gave Him over to the Romans to beat Him
and taunt Him
and mock and scourge and humiliate Him—
And He didn't even speak up to defend Himself!

He saved others, He could've come down from that cross and showed them all—
why didn't He do anything?
Why'd He just die?
Why was He such a failure—?

And so after hanging around Jerusalem for a couple days to see what would happen,
the two disciples were now on their way back home to Emmaus.

It's about a 7 mile walk,
so they had plenty of time to replay the events of Holy Week in their minds.

They were angry at Judas for betraying Him.

They were frustrated that they'd spent so long following this Jesus.

And they were, no doubt, sad that such a good man died so innocently.

And as they walked with their heads hung low,

exchanging sad stories and so forth,

Someone else came up beside them and walked with them.

He wasn't sad,

His head wasn't hung low,

and there were no tears in His eyes.

He even had a bit of joy and a smile on His face when He asked them,

“What's this you're talking about as you walk?” (24:17)

They looked at Him, a bit dumbly, and said,

“Are you the only One who doesn't know what's happened these few days?” (24:18)

And then the stranger innocently says,

“What things?” (24:19)

The two disciples showed good restraint here—

this truly was a *dumb question!*

But rather than chewing out the stranger,

they calmly told Him of what happened—

“Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet,

mighty in word and deed before God and all people—

how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to be crucified.

We hoped He was the One to redeem Israel—

[but apparently not].

And on top of it all, the tomb is empty—

[someone must have stolen His body].” (24:19-21)

And now the stranger changes His tone—

He's no longer innocently asking questions, or naively pretending to be unaware:

“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe *all that the prophets have spoken!*

Wasn't it *necessary* that the Christ should suffer these things,

and *then* enter into His glory?” (24:26)

Then the stranger became the teacher, the preacher, the prophet:

“And beginning with Moses and *all* the Prophets, He interpreted to them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning *Himself*” (24:27).

And they soon learned that all of Scripture is simply one story.

There's only one message.

From Genesis to Malachi (the Old Testament),

all you get is the story of God coming to man and redeeming him from his sin—
of suffering persecution and hardship and even crucifixion,
all for your sake!

To make things right between you and God.

There's nothing else,

no other story or God or anything else—

just the message that God dies *for you*;

and that three days later He rises *for you*.

Good Friday to Easter Sunday—

that's the story of Moses and all the Prophets.

But even after this lengthy teaching from the stranger,

even after He'd gone through Isaiah and Deuteronomy and Hosea and Numbers,

showing that each speaks of the Suffering Servant of God on behalf of Israel,

they never stopped to think about who this stranger was!

All they knew was that they liked Him.

They liked hearing the story;

They liked remembering Moses and the kings and prophets of old!

They didn't want it to stop!

And so, as they drew near to Emmaus,

and the stranger pretended to go on further,

the two **“urged Him strongly, saying,**

‘Stay with us, for its toward evening and the day's far spent’ (24:29).

So Jesus stuck around a little longer.

And coming into the house, sitting down at the table, Jesus took the spot of the host.

“He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them” (24:30).

He did the whole Maundy Thursday gig all over again!

He shared a meal that was much more than a meal.

It was a meal that followed the preaching of Christ and Him Crucified!

It was a meal delivered by Christ to His disciples.

It was a meal that forever changed these two that once walked along the
Emmaus Road.

For in this meal,

“their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him” (24:31).

Everything clicked.

The stranger that walked up beside them in their sadness and anger and frustration and fear,
had now brought them along through the preaching of their sins forgiven—

forgiven by the same Jesus that hung crucified for them just a few days ago!

And so it is that Jesus continues to walk up beside you even today.

He meets you in your trouble and sadness and fear and brokenness.

Sometimes He has to shake things up a bit and call you foolish for wanting Jesus in a way other than the way of the cross.

(Grace, 8am Only)

[[He came up right beside little Karlie this morning,

He called her foolish, too—

yes, as cute and loveable as she may seem—

she needs this forgiveness, too!

He forgave her,

He washed her and made her white as snow.

He said, “Karlie Marie, you’re mine!

My name is on you—

and with it my grace and favor and blessings and life.”

And so Karlie recognizes Him now and always as Lord and Savior.

She has now repented and been baptized, just as Peter urged us in the first reading today.

And with this Baptism, she’s also received the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit—

that’s also what we’re promised with Baptism!]]

That’s how our Lord is.

He comes up beside us, comforts and sustains us,

nourishes us through His own body and blood given from this very altar.

He washes us with the forgiveness of sins and gives us His Holy Spirit.

He promises never to leave or abandon us.

His cross wasn’t a failure.

His death wasn’t a disappointment.

In fact, everything hinges on His cross and His death,

and His victory over both on the third day.

That’s why today is another Easter,

another Resurrection,

another joyous encounter with the risen Christ for you.

So happy Mother’s Day, moms, because

Christ is risen!

He’s risen indeed, alleluia!

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit