

Third Sunday of Easter [a]

April 6, 2008

Readings

Acts 2:14, 22-33

1 Peter 1:17-21

Luke 24:13-35

Calendar

April 7: World Health Day <http://www.who.int/world-health-day/en/>

April 11: 45th Anniversary of Pacem In Terris

Quotes

However tiring, the road to Emmaus leads from a sense of discouragement and bewilderment to the fullness of Easter faith. ... As the light of the risen Christ illumines the whole universe, we can only express solidarity with all our brothers and sisters in the Middle East who have been caught in a maelstrom of armed violence and retaliation. The roar of weapons must give way to the voice of reason and conscience: sincere concern for the legitimate aspirations of all peoples and the scrupulous observance of international law are the only way to bring the parties back to the negotiating table and to mark out a path of brotherhood for those peoples.

John Paul II, 18 April 2001

Peace must be built on the basis of justice in a world where the personal and social consequences of sin are evident.

US Bishops, The Challenge of Peace, #56

Like the disciples of Emmaus, believers, supported by the living presence of the risen Christ, become in turn the traveling companions of their brothers and sisters in trouble, offering them the word which rekindles hope in their hearts. With them they break the bread of friendship, brotherhood and mutual help. This is how to build the civilization of love. This is how to proclaim the hoped-for coming of the new heavens and the new earth to which we are heading.

John Paul II, Jubilee Day of Migrants and Refugees

Solidarity... is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.

John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 38

Thoughts for your consideration

It is no accident that the Risen Christ is discovered in the breaking of bread which takes place after the sharing of stories and questions on the road. The sharing of bread and the sharing of stories both bring people together. People begin to see things in a new way. In these experiences God is discovered. We discover God in new ways when we listen to the stories of people, especially those who are in any struggling or in need.

The gospel story is a story of discovery, of finding God in the unexpected. It challenges us to look for God in the unexpected – especially in welcoming the stranger and the needy. Maybe, now is the time for us to learn anew from the wars in which we are involved. Maybe now is a time for us to reflect on the needs of immigrants and people of other ethnic and national backgrounds. Maybe now is the time for us to learn from the religious experience of others and from their struggle for justice.

The social teaching of the church is concerned with the nourishment of all the people of the world – spiritually and also physically. Whenever we share the Eucharist – whenever we break bread together -- we cannot but be aware of all those who are hungry. We cannot but be aware that all human beings share a common story. We cannot but be aware of our need to share what we have. We cannot but be aware of the need for justice in the world.

Questions for Reflection in your Faith Sharing Group

When have you see God in the Eucharist?

When have you experienced Christ in some other sharing of food?

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How have you found God in an unexpected place or person?

Actions – Links

The text of John XXIII's Encyclical **Pacem in Terris**, issued 45 years ago on April 11, 1963, can be found at: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem_en.html

Peace on Earth—which man throughout the ages has so longed for and sought after—can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established order.

“**World Health Day**, on 7 April, marks the founding of the World Health Organization and is an opportunity to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year. In 2008, World Health Day focuses on the need to protect health from the adverse effects of climate change.” See: <http://www.who.int/world-health-day/en/>

“Crazy Facts”

The World Health Organization reports that “A new estimate shows that close to half a million women died of maternal causes in 2005. About 99% of these deaths occurred in developing countries. Despite the global commitment to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 5.5%, the current rate of decline is about less than 0.4% per annum.”

Prayers of Intercession

Response: May we find Christ in the sharing of bread.

Let us remember those who are hungry today. We pray....

Let us remember those who are hungry for peace and an end to war. We pray....

Let us remember those who feel alone and without community. We pray....

Let us remember those who are in need of health care. We pray....

Let us remember those who are denied their human rights. We pray....

Let us remember refugees and immigrants. We pray....

Prayer and Meditation

An African prayer for refugees

from <http://peace.mennolink.org/articles/prayafrica.html>

O Brother Jesus, who as a child was carried into exile,
remember all those who are deprived of their home or country,
who groan under the burden of anguish and sorrow,
enduring the burning heat of the sun,
the freezing cold of the sea,
or the humid heat of the forest,
searching for a place of refuge.
Cause these storms to cease, O Christ.
Move the hearts of those in power
that they may respect the men and women
whom you have created in your image;
that the grief of refugees may be turned to joy,
as when you led Moses and your people out of captivity.

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A prayer from Clement of Rome

We beseech thee, Master, to be our helper and protector.
Save the afflicted among us; have mercy on the lowly;
raise up the fallen; appear to the needy; heal the ungodly;
restore the wanderers of thy people;
feed the hungry; ransom our prisoners;
raise up the sick; comfort the faint-hearted.