FR. GARY'S CORNER

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today's Gospel passage recalls the encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus by two of His disciples. The encounter with Jesus on the day of His resurrection, not only recalls a biblical event, but provides a template for our own encounters with the risen Lord.

Note how Jesus is walking with them and they don't recognize Him. How often does that happen in our own lives? Jesus comes to us in His word, in the Sacraments or even in the poor and we are oblivious to His presence. We are often blinded by the preoccupations with the things of the world, the busyness of daily life.

Cleopas and the other unnamed disciple explain how they are downcast because things didn't work out like they had hoped. Jesus didn't do what they thought He would do. Maybe they thought He would exert great political power or drive out the Romans by force, but instead, He ended up being put to death on a cross.

How often are we "upset" with God because He does not answer our prayer like we thought He should? We pray for healing, and it doesn't come. We pray for that perfect job opportunity, and it doesn't materialize. We may even fall into despair and doubt God.

Jesus rebukes the two disciples for their lack of belief and then reveals to them how the Scriptures all point to Him. Their hearts begin to burn within them. They might not fully understand, but something deep within longs for Jesus to stay with them. We too only come to know Jesus by immersing ourselves in His word, the Scriptures, and by communing with Him in prayer, speaking to and listening to Him. We too then long for Him.

Finally, the two disciples come to truly recognize Jesus in the "breaking of the bread". It is allegoric language for the Eucharist, where we too truly encounter Jesus. And then, they go back to share the news of their encounter. So should we also do.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life,

Fr. Gary