

3rd Sun. Easter 2026

You can still purchase raffle tickets for the school auction fundraiser, those should be available in the back of church after Mass.

+ The beginning of our Gospel is rather funny if you think about it. Most of the time it's hard to pick up on humor in Scripture. Of course today's Gospel passage is the Road to Emmaus, where Cleopas and his companion were headed. And what I find funny is Jesus' first words to them after approaches them. The death of Christ is very fresh in their minds, yet they're confused about the rumors of Jesus being alive. Jesus very casually asks, what are you guys talking about...he plays dumb. They don't recognize him and are shocked that anyone could be unaware of what had transpired in Jerusalem. It'd be like talking to Neil Armstrong in 1970, what do you mean you haven't heard that we landed on the moon.

“Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know.” When in fact Jesus is the only visitor to Jerusalem who does fully know and understand what has occurred. And then we have the greatest bible study ever, Jesus explains to them how everything in the Old Testament was pointing to Christ and fulfilled in him. When they arrive in Emmaus, “he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him.” He gave them his body, the Eucharist. The road to Emmaus was a Mass...you had the opening of the Scriptures...the Word of God...followed by the Eucharist.

The Sacrifice of the Mass is how we participate in God's plan for us...we get to enjoy the purpose our being created and redeemed by Christ...union with God. Now that's God's plan for us, but it's often mysterious. For those who believe in God it can be a real challenge to reconcile His goodness and power with all of the horrible things that happen in the world and in our life. We're often taken aback or discouraged when we read or watch the news. When we see

everything going on in the world we can be left wondering, where is God in all this...is He in control or not?

Peter's sermon which we heard part of in our reading from Acts Ch. 2, reminds us that nothing that happens is outside of God's pre-arranged plan and happens for a reason. Contemporary events, just like in the days of old, play a role in God's plan, and we need to maintain our faith in that. We hear from Peter in the 2nd reading as well, and he continues with the same theme. Just as the passion of Christ unfolded as God foresaw and foretold, so too the things today are part of God's plan. They may be hard to understand, but so was Jesus' passion and death. The disciples headed towards Emmaus show us that...how could he have died, we thought he was the Messiah.

Our faith can be subjected to many tests throughout our life. But for our faith to grow, and as a result, support greater charity, our faith has to be stretched. And what we find in Scripture gives us the reassurance we need. Peter says, "You who are Jews...This man, delivered up by the set *plan and foreknowledge* of God, you killed...But God raised Him up." You know this wasn't a mistake. God wasn't like, oh shoot, they killed my son...I guess he needs to rise from the dead now. And even further back, it's not like God created Adam and Eve, and was surprised that they disobeyed Him...I guess I'll have to send my Son to die for them now. No...God knew and planned the death and Resurrection from all eternity. There *wasn't* a time where God didn't have this in mind.

This is what God has revealed to us in the Old Testament. All of the prophecies, there's over 50 of them that point to Christ or what he did. Think about the other world religions...Islam, Buddhism...they're not just other versions of Christianity. No other founder of a religion was ever predicted in the centuries leading up to their time on earth. Only Jesus Christ fulfilled ancient prophecies. No one prophesized the coming of Buddha. No one prophesized the

coming of Muhammad...well not by name, Paul did talk about Satan masquerading as an angel of light promoting false doctrine...but you get my point. And this was compelling to many Jews, who became Catholic as Peter and the Apostle began preaching the Gospel.

In our first reading Peter quotes David from Psalm 16. "You will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption." Jesus rose from the dead before his body began to corrupt. It's the fulfillment of prophecy such as this one, that serves as what theologians call motives of credibility. Motives of credibility are not proofs, they're not evidence...if they were, no one would doubt God's existence or the truth of Christ. That still requires faith, but these motives of credibility...fulfilled prophecy, miracles...these things are what make our faith reasonable. They reveal the trustworthiness of God...they point out to us that it is reasonable to believe in God and what He says. And that is what allows us to have faith in Him.

When we attend Mass and are attentive, we have before us the presence of Christ, that's what we celebrate in the liturgy...while also hearing in Scripture how God prepared the world and our life to recognize and enjoy that presence. You need the later in order to be aware of the former. Cleopas and the other disciple were in the presence of Christ, but unaware until our Lord explained the Scriptures. Perhaps they failed to recognize Jesus because they were so preoccupied with the events that had occurred. So too, when we focus on all that has gone wrong we struggle to notice the presence of God. But if we are open to His grace, He reveals His plan...how He is at work in our life. Besides giving tremendous weight or confirmation to what we believe, it offers us the reassurance we need at times...which is that God keeps His promises. He has a plan, and it is the path of life for us because it leads to loving friendship with Him in Heaven.