

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, May 4th 2014

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke: 24: 32)

During their three years together, everything for the disciples had changed. Their old lives had vanished. Who were they before they met Jesus and answered his call? Their families at first begged them to stop the foolishness and come home. Who will support the children? But years passed. The foolishness spread throughout their families. Now all had become followers of Jesus. His mission was their own.

In the company of Jesus, they knew who they were. But he was torn from them abruptly. Brought to trial before a mob, he was tortured and executed as an enemy of God. The man of healing power, the one who preached forgiveness, was humiliated. Frightened, all but a few ran away. Grief and confusion filled them, and they could not see.

Searching for a lost child, it is hard to breathe. To be abandoned is piercing pain. Jesus was left alone to face the angry crowd as his companions fled into the night. Would they run back to their fishing nets and bury themselves in their former lives? The light had gone out for them.

Jesus felt their desolation in his bones. No wonder the tomb emptied out so quickly: he did not abandon them for long. Walking together, the two disciples shared their troubles with the stranger. The men were struggling to make sense of the horror. The stranger spoke as if he knew them. He went back to Moses and traced the events that led to the death of their beloved companion. His words helped to settle their hearts, but it was the breaking of the bread that opened their eyes.

We seek the words or signs that tell us who we are. It is difficult to continue the search if recognition is not found. Pope Francis says that the death and resurrection of Christ is the heart of the gospel. Here we discover that we are not alone on the road. Here I learn who is God and who am I. It was this joy that gave Peter the courage to speak to the Jews about the man who was raised from the dead. To be found brings joy that we cannot keep to ourselves.

Jeanne Schuler - Creighton University Student