

Lord, You Will Show Us The Path Of Life

3rd Sunday of Easter 2020

Not unlike the disciples in today's Gospel, our expectations and hopes for this spring—the people we would be involved with, the experiences like work and school emerging from winter seclusion, graduations, sports, weddings and Sunday Mass—have been turned upside down, and dashed. **Now What?** We wait on word from our public and medical leadership for which way forward: re-start the economy and social life a little, or more sheltering at home? Which way?

Today's two Gospel travelers on the way to Emmaus, are on a much more profound "Way" than they know as they are joined by their unknown companion. They are looking for a way out of their discouragement—even devastation—over Jesus' death. "we were hoping..." they say.

We know there is a way forward out of this pandemic even if not the particular steps. They did not. Nor did they know that this fellow wayfarer was giving them directions. He did tell them the way for the Christ—the anointed One of God who would bring them salvation—was through suffering and not around it.

The directions Jesus gave them took them back through the story of God with us. They were redirected to see even the disasters that seemed to be God's forgetting them, were really invitations to trust even more! To enter the faithfulness that self-sacrificing for relationship called forth in us, and in that, find two life-changing things: One— you and I still together rather than apart because I chose us over me to avoid the self-sacrifice; Two—God's love and presence with me in the midst of what looked so bad for me.

When they let Jesus take them down *that* road of understanding this God who created and who promised to always love them, what happened to their hearts? Their testimony is "our hearts began to burn within!" *Burn!* Catch fire with what? Wasn't it Hope? Hope that the goodness of life Jesus had promised in the Beatitudes: "blessed are the meek, the merciful, those who thirst for justice, the peacemakers and the persecuted for their faith"—was still possible? The life-changing Kingdom of God's reign over all that oppressed human life—was not pie in the sky! No wonder they insisted that this companion change *His direction* and join them for their meal.

Breaking bread opened their eyes to Jesus with them—all along! As with us, if we make room for Jesus, He is *always* ready to join us. Was it only because their companion did what Jesus had done so many times before meals? I have to believe it was because of Jesus' re-direction on their way and what they had heard of His tomb being empty after Jesus' crucifixion. That new insight opened their eyes to the potential for God to be in *what for faithful love* breaks our lives apart, or our hearts open. No wonder they changed *their direction* back to Jerusalem to tell their friends!

So what is our way forward? Surely it includes recognizing Jesus *on the way with us* back to whatever our new normal will be. He will be there when we finally get to break the Eucharistic bread together at Mass. May it be soon! But what Jesus told them on the road about God's history with God's children is still true—God is always faithfully there to be found when the bread of our lives is broken together. That is what Jesus invites us to recommit to when the Eucharistic bread is broken and shared and received!

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Our way forward—our next steps today and every day—is to look for Christ with us when our hearts and lives are broken open to share oneself in loving service. Life together in the midst of pandemic whether in a house of 6 or 8 people, a seminary of 20 men, or in my individual interactions with masked strangers 6 ft. apart, does that breaking *if we let it*. It invites me step forward upon the way of Christ in the beatitudes: to trust Christ waits for me: when obedience rather than challenging my parents is the road of meekness I take; when listening as you vent is my gift of mourning with you, when I pray for those denied righteous care as our nation takes care of itself; when my hurt unites me with Christ on His cross rather than escalate an argument.

Resurrection Hope allows the Beatitudes to break apart the bread of one's life. They are the Way of Jesus. He will nourish us with them now. Then when His Way takes us together again around His altar at Mass, like Cleopas and his companion who raced back to the disciples in Jerusalem, we will have our stories to tell of recognizing Christ with us, in the breaking of *our* bread.

To help with that this week, below are the Beatitudes. But before them, is the responsorial psalm for this Sunday: Our refrain is rightly: **Lord, You will show us the path of life**. It's a powerful daily prayer to make for your household this Easter week that we are told will be the peak of our experience of the pandemic. A heart burning with His peace is my prayer for all!

Fr. Tom

Responsorial Psalm [PS 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11](#)

R. (11a) **Lord, you will show us the path of life.**

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;
I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you."
O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot.

R. **Lord, you will show us the path of life.**

I bless the LORD who counsels me;
even in the night my heart exhorts me.
I set the LORD ever before me;
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

R. **Lord, you will show us the path of life.**

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,
my body, too, abides in confidence;
because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

R. **Lord, you will show us the path of life.**

You will show me the path to life,
abounding joy in your presence,
the delights at your right hand forever.

R. **Lord, you will show us the path of life.**

(The Beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-11 follow on the next page)

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The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil
against you [falsely] because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.