

Third Sunday Easter – Luke 24:13-35

They recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread

*Sister Anita writes in **Catholic Women Preach**:*

"...We continue to celebrate the greatest event in the history of humanity, the scriptures proclaim repeatedly—just in case the reality of this astonishing truth is too much for us to comprehend—that this Jesus...born into poverty, who lived in an obscure village called Nazareth, whose parentage was suspect, who died on a garbage heap on the outskirts of (Jerusalem), one among many criminals—that this Jesus died and rose **according to God's preordained plan** for our salvation."

Our Marianist Brothers in India minister to the rag pickers by providing Marianist schools and women's empowerment programs. Thousands of people are given a chance to have a better life. With Jesus' background, the ragpickers would feel quite at home with the likes of Jesus. What would we change or do differently to feel more at home with the Lord? We certainly do not have to become rag-pickers, but it would help to understand who Jesus was and by knowing more of his background than that given above.

This connects with Richard Rohr's article, **Reading for Transformation**. And he writes:

"The amazing wonder of the biblical revelation is that God is very different than we thought and much better than we feared...The God that Israel—and Jesus—discovered is consistently seen to be merciful, gracious, faithful, forgiving, and steadfast in love...If we believe in inspiration, and trust that the Spirit was guiding the *Bible's listening and writing*...(w)e will trust that there is a development of crucial divine wisdom inside this anthology of books we call the Bible...If we read the Bible merely searching for certain conclusions so we can quickly **reassure our false self**, our spiritual growth will just stop. We will also become a rather toxic person for ourselves and others."

If we really want to know and love God we will pick up the Scriptures and read, as Saint Augustine discovered. His **conversion point** was when he was sitting in a friend's garden he heard a child singing the words, "Pick up and Read, Pick up and Read." So, he picked up the Scriptures and read. And it changed his life.

At one point on the way to Emmaus the disciples realized that their hearts were burning within them. These two I am sure knew their Scriptures by heart, but there is a difference between being enlightened and our hearts burning within us. It depends on whether we read the Scriptures for information, that is with the head, to defend ourselves. The Scriptures begin transforming us by preparing our heads, but the real conversion is in the heart.

When leaders use the Scriptures to defend themselves to the point they see themselves as the redeemer, then we have an "anti-Christ." Saint Francis famously told his brother friars, "Preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words."

"When we get to the Risen Jesus, there is nothing to be afraid of in God. Jesus's very breath is identified with *forgiveness* and the *Divine Shalom*," *Richard Rohr reminds us*. "If the Risen Jesus is the final revelation of the nature of God's heart, then we live in a safe and loving universe. But it is not that God has changed, or that the Hebrew God is a different God than the God of Jesus. It's that we are **growing up** as we move through the biblical texts and deepen our experience. God doesn't change, but our readiness for such a God takes a long time to change. If we stay with the text and tend to our inner life with God, our **capacity for God will increase and deepen.**"

At one point our hearts will burn within.

St. Teresa of Avila

Let nothing disturb you,

Nothing affright you.

All things are passing;

God never changes,

Patient endurance attains to all things.

Who God possesses in nothing is wanting.

Alone God suffices.