

## Our Road to Emmaus.

Here we are in this time immediately after the Easter weekend, when we have travelled again the path of endings, pain, death, and despair from the last supper to the cross on Calvary and thence to the tomb in Gethsemane. Even though the disciples had been with Jesus on his teaching journey around Galilee and in Jerusalem and had heard him foretell his death as being necessary to complete his mission as foretold by the prophets, they didn't in their hearts believe it could actually happen. They expected some last-minute miracle to avoid this indescribable catastrophe. They were tested and found wanting. Their world had ended. They were deep in grief and despair. We can understand all that as we have had similar experiences in our own lives.

On that third day, the women went to the tomb and found it empty, they received proof that He had risen and went back to tell them immediately – but they still couldn't get their heads around what they heard even when Peter went to the tomb and came back to corroborate that Jesus was no longer there. What did it mean to them and what were they to do going forward?

Then Luke tells us, on the same day, Cleopas (also known as Simon) and one of the other disciples, had taken themselves away from Jerusalem, the site of all their grief, pain, and disappointment and were trudging along the road to Emmaus about 60 Stadia (18Km) away. They walked along, aware of what had transpired in Gethsemane, discussing the events and what it all meant for them and the new future they hoped they were part of. Wrapped up in their grief and trying to make sense of the future, when the stranger came alongside of them and asked them what they were discussing and, they engaged with him and told him all that had befallen and why they were so despondent.

Jesus didn't immediately reveal himself to them but helped them talk the situation through. True the Gospel says he rebuked them for their unbelief and why everything had been foretold by the prophets – which in their hearts they already knew as Jesus had already told them that.

Then when they reached Emmaus and it looked like he was going further they asked him to stay and eat with them as he was clearly a kindred spirit and the conversation had helped them deal with things.

At that point when it came time to break the bread and give a blessing, they then realised who they had been journeying with. Can you imagine the Joy they must have felt? And then Jesus vanishes from their sight! Left with this amazing revelation of not just "good news" but truly "Great News", they rushed back to Jerusalem and told the other disciples what all they had seen and experienced.

No doubt the other disciples were disappointed that now Mary, Cleopas and the other disciple had seen the risen Christ, they had not, but it began to revive hope in their hearts that Jesus's promises were coming true and he would be with them and give them aid and

direction for their tasks going forward and at that moment, Jesus appeared in their midst and having shown them the wounds on his body, asked them for something to eat and then repeated to them that everything was foretold and opened their minds to understating . He then led them toward Bethany where he vanished from their presence but told them his Father would send them what they needed to preach forgiveness in his name. However, we don't need to go on a long dusty journey, wrapped in despair to know that Christ rose from the dead and is with us now. We are blessed that from their recorded experience, we know that Jesus rose and proved to them that everything foretold had taken place and that his sacrifice was not in vain but gives those who believe in him everlasting life. We are however, on our own Easter-tide road to an Emmaus. Our is not near Jerusalem, but it certainly has recently begun with the dire and dreadful events – the Pandemic - which is testing the faith of many and will continue to do so as we go through the following months and years. We can only set off on our road, take courage from the Easter message of hope and redemption given to us by Jesus through the disciples and, like them, share that hope with those around us whether they profess the Christian faith or not as Jesus said that the new Covenant was not just for the Jews, but for everyone the world over.

Where the mist rises from the sea  
Where the waves creep upon the shore  
Where the wrack lifts upon the strand,  
I have seen the Lord

Where the sun awakens the day  
Where the road winds on its way  
Where the fields are sweet with hay,  
I have seen the Lord

Where the stars shine in the sky  
Where the streets so peaceful lie  
Where the darkness is so nigh,  
I have seen the Lord

The Lord is here,  
The lord is there,  
The lord is everywhere,  
The lord is high,  
The lord is low,  
The lord is on the path I go

*from David Adam's book "Borderlands"*

## Prayer

When the demands of life encroach on quiet moments,  
When pressures grind our spirits into dust,  
When time dries up like water in a desert,  
And prayer is pushed into mere words like dried up husks,  
Lord, kindle the flame  
Free me to follow You,  
And I will obey Your truth.  
Always keep me faithful. Amen