

Third Sunday of Easter

Year A

Acts 2:14, 22-33

Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

I Pt 1:17-21

Lk 24:13-35

“On The Road To Emmaus”

George R. Morgan, O.S.A.

He was totally free. Free to simply walk along and listen – listen to them struggle with their human nature: the doubts, the fears, the questions, the feelings of abandonment, the loneliness. He understood. He’d been there. It had been just last Thursday night when he had felt the strong, negative political attitudes building up all around him and he was frightened. He was in the garden at Gethsemane and he prayed to our Loving God to take “this cup” away from him. And his Loving Father said: NO. Take up your cross and walk –and I will walk with you. And the more vulnerable you become the more easy access my unstoppable love has into your whole being. (Is this something about why bad things happen to good people?) And so Jesus walked and fell and grew weaker and all he could do was love. He met his mother and he was incapable of doing anything but love her. And he met the holy women of Jerusalem and Simon of Cyrene and on the hill there again was his mother and John and the other Marys. He loved them.

On the cross he had no physical energy left, but he could love. He invited the thief to join him in paradise and he looked at all of us and said: Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing. And then he slipped away into perfect love.

And so, on this morning, he had awakened in the tomb. If we wanted to, we could imagine him thinking: OK That’s done. But I don’t think so. Rather, I imagine him awakening and thinking: OK Let’s go! I’m free. Totally free to love. There is nothing now between me and everyone!

We find him in our Gospel today falling in with Cleopas and his companion. To do so was not at all unusual. It was normal hospitality when traveling in the desert. He was simply company for them. Talking gently about the Scriptures. Not demanding to be recognized.

As evening drew near, Cleopas and his companion unwrapped themselves from their grief and remembered their manners. Again, desert hospitality demanded that no one be left alone in the desert at night. They took him into their home and began to care for him. As they allowed themselves to become more open to this “stranger,” they began to pick up on the great love in their presence, especially in the “breaking of the bread.” And the rest is history.

In conclusion: do not look here for a lesson, or a demand, or a “commandment.” Rather allow yourself to simply hear an invitation, and respond as best you can.