

Dear Brothers and Sisters



While they were speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” Jn. 20 19-31

Jesus, Risen from the dead, appears to the disciples in the upper room, while simultaneously appearing to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The phenomenon of bi-location has also been experienced by many Saints, including Padre Pio.

One of the disciples on the road to Emmaus is named as Cleopas, or Cleophas, the brother of St. Joseph - Jesus/ uncle. His name is the abbreviated form of Cleopatros, meaning glory of God. More familiar to us in the feminine form, Cleopatra. Cleophas and his companion did not recognize Jesus risen from the dead, that is until the breaking of the bread.

Like them, we also need a progression in discernment to perceive Christ Risen in our midst.

On the road to Emmaus the disciples were speaking about what had occurred in Jerusalem: The Last Supper, the garden of Gethsemane, about the betrayal, the Passion and the Crucifixion. and about how some of the women said they found the tomb empty.

In talking about these things, Jesus himself appeared in their midst.

A couple of years ago I went to dinner on Easter Sunday. There were at least twenty people around the table. The host invited everyone present to say something about their experience of Easter. One by one the guests spoke. I was surprised that they did not just say “I liked this” or “I liked that.”

People began to speak existentially. That is, they began to speak about what Easter meant to them, saying how and in which way they had experienced God in Holy Week and the Triduum. and in their lives. In speaking about these things, I could sense that God became present at that table.

Someone once said that a meal in which God is not mentioned is like a pagan sacrifice. It is impossible for us to sit down and eat without mentioning God. To do so would be like sacrificing to idols.

Growing up it would have been unthinkable to sit down as a family to eat without saying a prayer together first—grace before meals. You couldn’t leave the table until grace after meals!

The word and the breaking of bread. These two things make those at table experience communion. While we speak of these things Jesus himself comes to stand in our midst. The disciples were talking about all these things when Jesus himself came and stood in their midst.

The same Jesus who died and rose from the dead stands in our midst today. He wants to be a guest at our table. What will you talk about at table today?

Fr. Sean