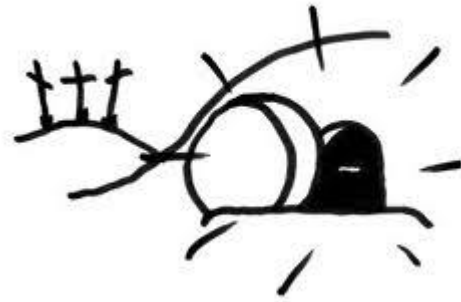


## Thoughts for the Third Sunday of Easter 2020

**Hallelujah, Christ is risen!  
He is risen indeed, hallelujah!**



The Gospel story for today is a well known story of faith and hope.

Two of Jesus's friends were going, probably, home on the evening of the day after the Sabbath, the day on which we now know, that Jesus had risen from the dead. But they were not sure. They were talking about those things so intently, that they did not notice another traveller catching up with them and listening in to their conversation.

"What are you talking about?" he asks them, and we are told that they stopped in their tracks and looked at him, I imagine, in total amazement. "Are you the only person in Jerusalem who does not know what has been happening?" To Jesus's response: "What things?" it all pours out and they tell him about the trial and crucifixion, and the women and angels at the tomb, then Simon and John, running to see for themselves, and the story goes on: "but they did not see him".

So Jesus enlightens them. We are told he sounded rather exasperated, if we are to believe the words he spoke. He called them foolish and slow to believe, but I like to think it was a fond exasperation rather than a denouncement. These were some of his friends, and he is pleased to see them, and I think, pleased to be able to explain to them what it all means. And they journey to the village where they are going, and Jesus makes a move as if to continue his journey. But the night is closing in and they invite him to stay. It appears that he will, and he goes with them and a meal is prepared and ut in front of them. The story continues: "When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight."

And the two friends get up from the table and return to Jerusalem, seeking out the disciples and finding them in an uproar because now Jesus had appeared to Simon, they were able to add their own story to the mix.

So, what does this story have for us today? Is it just another resurrection appearance to add to the many that are still to happen? Yes, it is, but it is also much more than that. First of all, look at the people involved. Here we have two of the companions of Jesus and his disciples, but they are not actually part of the inner circle of the twelve, or eleven as they had now become. Here were two people on the edge of the group. We know that one was Cleopas. Perhaps the other was his wife. We are not told. But the important thought here, is that Jesus appeared to them almost before he had appeared to anyone else. You don't need to be part of an inner circle to know Jesus as a good friend. Ordinary is quite good enough!

Second, being ordinary did not stop these two people returning immediately to Jerusalem to proclaim the good news to the disciples and the rest of their group. Being ordinary should not prevent any of us from proclaiming the good news about Jesus.

And thirdly, although they did not at once recognise Jesus, they knew him at the moment he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Just so, in our Services of Holy Communion, do we come face to face with the living Jesus as we take and share his body and blood given for us on the cross that first Easter.

It is hard having to do without our Holy Communion services at the moment, but we can still share the good news with those with whom we come into contact, even if social distancing makes contact difficult. This is because we meet Jesus everywhere, and in all those people who are helping and caring for others, and indeed, in those who are being cared for too.

By asking Jesus into our everyday life, we will keep our faith burning, and that will nourish the hope of the resurrection that is the root of our Christian faith.

**Hallelujah, Christ is risen!**  
**He is risen indeed, hallelujah!**

Wishing you every blessing,  
Linda (Jacquet)

