

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Third Sunday of Easter — April 14, 2024

*“And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling,
he said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’”*

– Luke 24:41a –

This is such an odd statement. How can they be happy about something they can’t believe is happening? Yet, haven’t we all experienced that at some point in our lives? Have you ever been so joyously happy and yet at the same time questioned how you could be so lucky? Have you ever received an award you didn’t think you deserved and yet accepted it with joy that you were the recipient? Have you ever seen a test result thinking that you surely failed only to discover that you did very well? Everyone can remember a time they have received something with joy but also disbelief.

That’s what happened to the disciples after the resurrection. They were so grief-stricken over the death of Jesus that his appearances probably did not make a difference at first. Imagine the conversation that was going on at the beginning of today’s Gospel lesson: “You saw Jesus? But He’s dead!” “Was it a ghost?” They were probably arguing about what was seen and experienced. Perhaps the witnesses saw someone that looked like Jesus. The witnesses’ testimony was rejected because it was ridiculous and downright impossible. One by one they began to see the truth when they witnessed Jesus with their own eyes. One by one they realized that they could no longer ignore the reality: Jesus was alive.

It is no surprise, then, that Jesus’ followers were both joyous and disbelieving. After all, this was beyond their understanding. The disciples who had seen Him probably said “See! We told you so!” Yet, even those disciples were probably scared and confused. How do you respond to a physical being that is a man and yet not a man? Even though Jesus had promised that He would be raised from the dead, the disciples never expected this turn of events. They were worried about the future; they were worried about their lives. Jesus was back among them, but how?

The disciples’ questions were answered with a simple request from Jesus, “Have you anything here to eat?” He wanted them to know that it was all true. He was alive again. He was different, yet He was the same. In joy as well as in happy disbelief, the disciples shared another meal with their Master.

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