

HOMILY III SUNDAY OF EASTER SEASON YEAR A

STAY WITH US LORD, BECAUSE IT IS ALMOST EVENING AND THE DAY IS NOW NEARLY OVER

Brothers and sisters... Today we encounter the disciples of Emmaus...

We know the name of one... the other remains open... so that each one of us, from our own experience of faith, may write our name...

They're walking... but, it's not just any walk... It's a journey of return... a journey of sadness... **a journey without hope...**

They go back home... they go back to what was before... **Because what they had hoped for...** seems not to have been fulfilled... **We had hoped...** they say...

And here! what I was saying begins to make sense... about writing our name into this passage of the Gospel... because that phrase... **could also be ours...** because all of us... at some point... **have felt that something didn't turn out as we expected...**

That something broke... that something was lost... something we longed for simply didn't happen...

And so... we walk... **we walk because we've to keep going...** but we walk without joy... without direction... as if nothing really makes much sense anymore...

And yet... In the midst of that journey... Jesus draws near... **The Lord does it again...** today, as every day of our lives... **it's the Lord who comes out to meet us...** The risen Jesus walks with them... but they don't recognize Him... **And this is deeply paschal...**

Because the Risen One... doesn't always impose Himself... **He isn't always obvious...** but He is there... He walks... He listens... He accompanies... He enters into our conversation...

Even when it's a conversation full **of confusion... of sadness... of questions...**

When we feel most alone... disoriented... the Lord is still there... **explaining to us the meaning of each situation...** And the most beautiful part is... That if we listen carefully... little by little **the heart begins to burn...**

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The heart begins to burn... **To the point that we reach that beautiful moment...**
When all we want to say is... **Stay with us!**

Stay with us, Lord, because it's almost evening... and darkness will try to take hold of us... **Stay with us...**

It's not a great prayer... it's not something complicated... it's a simple supplication...
But full of desire...

And perhaps today... that can also be our prayer... Lord... stay with us... stay in our homes... stay in our weariness... stay in our doubts... stay in my fears... in my pain...

And it's there... in that staying... where everything changes... Because in the breaking of the bread... their eyes are opened... **they recognize Him...**

My dear friends... it's in the Eucharist... in the gesture of self-giving... **That Christ allows Himself to be recognized...**

It was in that gesture that their eyes were opened and their hearts began to beat again... they recognized Him; the one who had died had returned to life...

He was the same... but in a different way; transfigured by the power of the Spirit, from now on they would only be able to recognize Him through the eyes of faith...

So then... if today the way we encounter Jesus is in the Eucharist... the question for us is...

If we recognize Him in the broken Bread..., are we also... broken bread for others? Do we break and share our lives... so that others may encounter Christ? Do we help the hearts of others... to also burn? **And burn with the joy of knowing that Jesus is alive...** And **that encountering Him will change their lives!**

Because when these disciples recognize Him... everything changes... They no longer walk... **they run...** They no longer go back to what was before... **they return to the community...** They return with joy... with urgency... with life...

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That is Easter... It's not only believing that Jesus lives... It's allowing that truth... to raise us up... to transform us... to set us in motion... **But now!** not with sadness... **but with fire in the heart...**

My dear brothers and sisters... today the Lord also walk with us... He also speaks to us... He also gives Himself to us in the Bread...

Let us ask Him for the grace to recognize Him... and to move... from a walk without meaning... to a life that runs... full of joy... because Christ... has risen... **And lives with us.**

Fr. Moices Rafael C.