

The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Luke 24:13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The Gospel of Christ.

Reflection

Life experiences can have a profound impact on the choices we make about how we use our God-given gifts. Dorothy Day was born in Brooklyn in 1897. At the age of 8, her father lost his job, and they were forced to move to a Chicago tenement. She knew what it was like to struggle from a young age. It is easy to see how this experience may have helped to fan the flame of justice that burned in her heart challenging her to use her voice, her gifts, to speak out.

Dorothy had a gift for writing. She started as a reporter for The Call in 1914. The more she learned, the more her passion grew. At the age of 20, Dorothy was among a group of women arrested and imprisoned for a White House suffrage protest. She participated in a hunger strike and was ultimately released. This would not be the last time she would find herself in prison because of her commitment to justice.

For a time, she was in a common law marriage, which led to the birth of her daughter Tamar and a time of self-reflection. She longed for what she called 'the abundant life'. She turned to God through the Roman Catholic Church when she realised that her deep concerns for those in need could be a part of how she embodied her faith. She could make a difference in the name of Christ.

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Scripture and faith, can light a fire within our hearts, calling us to respond in meaningful ways. The disciples on the road to Emmaus responded by returning to Jerusalem to share their experience. Dorothy Day responded, with the support of her friend Peter Maurin, by using her gifts, her faith, to likewise proclaim the Good News through the publication The Catholic Worker, which was first distributed May 1, 1933, and continues to this day.

Writing about justice wasn't enough. Dorothy and Peter also wanted to embody justice, embody a care for the most vulnerable. Together they started the Catholic Worker Movement, opening homes and farms to support those in need.

This work relied heavily on their faith and their willingness to continually return to scripture and God through prayer. There was always a risk that there would not be enough. There was always a chance the home or farm couldn't be sustained. After all, Catholic Worker Houses were first being established during the Great Depression!

When they were in need, they prayed. And they trusted God! They trusted God's blessings and that God would inspire people to share so that they would have enough. This trust remains an important lesson about what it means to allow the Good News to burn in our hearts.

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Hospitality, welcoming, inclusion, these create profound spaces of encounter. There is a vulnerability that happens when we gather in intimate ways. To host people in our homes is make space from our space in which they can be. This can become transformative. Strangers become friends, and even family. That level of inclusion can be an embodiment of profound love.

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No doubt it was a profound moment for the disciples who had walked the road to Emmaus with Jesus. In the intimacy of a meal, they truly saw him for who he is. In the breaking of bread, they gave thanks and believed!

We can imagine that there were moments in which those whom Dorothy served experienced her profound sense of compassion and love in the breaking of bread, the coming together for meal and nourishment. Through her sharing of her God-given gifts, she became an embodiment of the hands, feet, and voice of God for those around her and beyond. There are some 176 Catholic Worker Communities in existence today. The movement continues to make God known in the breaking of bread.

Dorothy Day died on Nov. 29, 1980. Her story offers us lessons today about how we too can have a passion for justice that intersects with our

faith. Her story shows us how we can use our gifts to proclaim the Good News. Her story challenges us to pray and trust God when we need support for the work God calls us to do. Her story reminds us about the power of hospitality to reveal God in the breaking of bread.

In our desire to continually embody our faith in ways like the example of Dorothy Day, let us pray as we sing: (VT) 712 Beauty for Brokenness.