

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Amen.

Our sermon text today is written in Luke 24:13-35

Let us pray ...

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight;
we pray through Your son, Jesus Christ.

Today in the Gospel reading we hear Jesus ask, *was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?*

This morning we heard St. Luke's account of two of Jesus' disciples encountering our risen Lord on the third day after His death. As we heard, two disciples were walking to on their way to Emmaus and discussing the events of the past several days. As they were doing so, someone comes and walked with them, and asks what they are talking about.

The disciples tell him, *"Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹But 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 happened. ²²Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."*

As we also heard, this man Jesus, says to them, *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

I don't know about you, but as I started to reflect on these words, something struck me; *O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that prophets have spoken!* These words stood out to me and began to highlight what he says next; *was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?*

As we truly and honestly reflect on these words, the reality behind them should strike us. These men, as they were listening to Jesus who had joined them, were still trying to come to grips with all they had witnessed. They were coming to terms with the fact that the one who they had followed, learnt from, and who they thought was going to redeem their

nation had now been ripped from their lives. Handed over for crucifixion by the chief priests and religious leaders. The man who claimed to be the Son of God was dead. And when some of the women had gone to the tomb his body was gone and they had seen a vision of angels where his body had been.

But it's not as if Jesus hadn't warned them of what was to come. Jesus had predicted His death and resurrection on several occasions, but the disciples either failed to comprehend what he was saying or refused to accept it. Quite simply, at the heart of the issue here is the faith of the disciples; their minds were too fixed on what they and the society around them thought and expected. They just couldn't comprehend that Jesus could rise from the dead and then be present with them. It's just not humanly possible, so it can't be, right? Even though they had witnessed everything they needed to believe, they were unable to see the truth of the resurrection.

O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that prophets have spoken! As we hear these words again, these words should strike us, simply for the reason that we are no better than the disciples in our reading today. Like the disciples we too either fail to comprehend what Jesus is saying or we simply just refuse to accept it.

Like those disciples, we are unable to see the truth of the resurrection, even though we have all we need to believe. We too are fixed on what we and the society around us thinks and expects. The issue for us is faith. We suffer the same lack of understanding of the importance of Jesus' death and resurrection and his presence with us. For so many people the focus of their faith has shifted from Christ and what he has said and done, and has shifted to us and what we say, what we do and think.

In all this we fail to see Jesus presence with us, assuring us of the full forgiveness of sins and of the certainty of salvation and eternal life. This leaves Jesus as not the Almighty God who is all important for our lives, but more of an example for us to follow. We end up looking everywhere else for answers and help. Perhaps in what the pope has said, or in what the latest pop church guru has said. Perhaps we look for it in our feelings, experiences and or the gathering of great crowds.

But this shouldn't surprise us, we seem to have this idea that we don't need to look to the Scriptures or to worship regularly, or to know who Jesus is and what he is like. We don't see a need to read them and hear what Jesus has to say in and about worship, or to know what is important for us and for our lives. Our failure to comprehend or our refusal to accept it leaves us with a distorted Jesus who becomes a god of our own liking who has been totally corrupted. The Scriptures make all of this very clear, if only we are willing to study them.

Thankfully, throughout the Bible God tell us of his plan for our salvation, of His promise that he would send his own Son to be our saviour. He tells us of the promise of the Lamb of God

who would come to be the sacrifice taking away the sin of the world. Of the promise that through the death and resurrection of the Christ, he would draw people back to himself. That His promise of the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, would be extended to all.

The Scriptures also make it quite clear that the *Christ should suffer these things* and die and then on the third day rise again *and enter into his glory*. That Jesus death on the cross is for our salvation. That He took onto himself the punishment for all that you and I have done and will do wrong, so that the full forgiveness of sins could be extended to each and every one of us.

Furthermore, the Scripture teaches us that through our baptisms we were joined to Jesus' death and resurrection and that we are given his Holy Spirit so that we can trust that everything that has been promised has been done for us.

Even though we can't come together at this time, we know that he comes to us personally and reveals himself to us in Holy Communion. When gather again for this holy meal, we remember *when he was at table with them, (how) he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.* ³¹ *And (how) their eyes were opened, and they recognized him*

In the Lord's Supper he personally comes to us and reveals himself to us. He gives us his very body and blood which he shed on the cross so that we can know for sure that we are forgiven and assured of life and salvation. Jesus himself says, *given and shed FOR YOU, for the forgiveness of sins*. There at the Altar rail he reveals himself to us as Lord and saviour and goes with us so that we can be absolutely sure that everything will work out for us.

As we finish up today, it is important to remember that the accounts we heard about this morning is not like some modern day sighting of things like Big-foot, UFO's, or Elvis ... you know those shadowy, grainy, out of focus images that could be almost anything. This is an account of people who had conversations with Jesus ... they touched Jesus ... they ate with Jesus. It's important to remember that this is not an account of people who saw something out of the corner of their eye, and is definitely not the result of someone's wishful thinking.

Rather It is true! *The Lord has risen*. So let us go forward with confidence and the sure hope, that now, with Jesus Christ, we have all that is good and important, because the Scriptures and the Sacraments have revealed it all to us.
Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Amen