

### EASTER III

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, no matter what happens in our lives, the Risen Jesus is always with us. God is near to those who seek Him and who want to live in His presence doing His will. The Emmaus incident is the story of a God who will not leave us alone when we are hurt and disappointed. God is with us all the time.

In the first and second reading Peter exhorts the early Christians to place their faith and hope in God who has saved them through the precious blood of His Son and who has raised Jesus from the dead. The root of their faith must be the resurrection of Jesus, and Peter argues that it is essential for everyone in the Christian community to have the experience of the risen Jesus in his or her life. Jesus walking with disciple reminds us the words from Mathew's gospel 28:20, I am with you always. It means Jesus is with us even when we do not recognize him.

We see in the Bible how the people encountered God in unexpected ways. Genesis 18:1-15. Running from his troubles, Jacob laid his head on a stone while he slept and saw a stairway to heaven. He is presented as wrestling all night with a manifestation of God in the flesh. Moses turned aside from his flock of sheep to see why a bush would burn and not be consumed and heard the voice of God from it. Saul of Tarsus met Jesus on the road to Damascus and Jesus got Saul's attention by knocking him

to the ground and striking him blind. God's self-disclosure to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus was unexpected, but in a radically different way from the encounters mentioned above.

God is with us always in our lives. Isaiah 43:2-3: *"When you pass through the water, I will be with you; in the rivers you shall not drown. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned; the flames shall not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your savior."* He wants to join us in our travels of life. Psalms 119:63, *"I am a companion of all who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts."* *"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them"* (Matthew 18:20).

Christ comes to us most clearly in the Word. Our tradition teaches us that the reading of the Scriptures, the study of the Scriptures and the proclamation of the message of the Scriptures are the primary ways in which we meet God. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* 21) tells us that Jesus in the Eucharist and in the Bible is to be equally venerated.

Therefore, we need to study the Bible, learn the Bible, memorize the Bible and meditate on the word of God. We know that Christ lives in the Bible. Therefore, we need to read the Scriptures daily to meet and converse with Jesus Christ.

Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, said: “The greatest gift that God gave to human beings is the Bible.” Another President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, said that it was a principle of his to read the Bible through each and every year.

The Apostles believed in the Risen Jesus different ways in their lives. On the first Sunday, by seeing the empty tomb Peter believed in the Risen Jesus. On the second Sunday, St. Thomas Apostle touched wounds of Jesus believed in Risen Jesus. On the third Sunday, the apostles heard the word of God from Jesus and breaking of the bread made the disciple to enlightened of their minds and believed in the Risen Jesus.

Therefore, let us examine of ourselves and ask God to believe in His word and have strong faith in the Risen Jesus.