

Be known to us Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread.

We just read the well-known road to Emmaus story for the Gospel reading. Cleopas and his or her companion (the name was used both for males and females) were traveling along and they met a person on the road.

He traveled with them, and as they walked, they told him about what had happened with this Jesus of Nazareth.

I suspect these two were followers of Jesus, though probably not in the inner circle, since this is the first we hear of them. It is possible that they were part of the crowds that would gather around Jesus, or perhaps even people who were in the kitchen helping to prepare that final meal before he died. In any event—they didn't recognize Jesus.

They didn't recognize him—that is, until he said and did something that jogged their memories. He repeated words they had heard before—perhaps from behind the closed kitchen door, and they watched him break bread again.

“This represents my body and blood—and how I am willingly giving up both because of my love for you. That's what love is,”—he's telling us—“love will willingly sacrifice even its own life—for another.” And then what did he say? “Every time you eat bread and drink wine,” (which was then and is now a very common part of mealtimes) “every time you do it—remember this sacrifice. Remember what love is, and what love does.”

And we do remember the love Jesus had for his friends—and we remember.

But it shouldn't be only at our Eucharist to do this.

Eucharist is lovely. Eucharist at church is “set apart” (that's what the *Holy in Holy Eucharist* means.) It helps us weekly to remember.

I sometimes wonder, though, what Jesus would make of the ritual, our special chalices and patens, special linen with crosses embroidered on them. Weekly Eucharist involves people who are trained to consecrate and distribute the bread and the wine. There are special people who ring bells, and set the table.

We love it. All the years of ritual --- adding to the original meal.

But what would Jesus think about it all?

I hear Jesus say—“Actually, folks, I was more thinking that EVERY TIME you break bread and drink your wine at meals—you remember me.”

Every single time. MMMMMM. Think about that.

But back to Cleopas and her friend. They recognized Jesus by his words and actions.

I remember when I was unexpectedly in the hospital one of you came and stayed with me. Because I was going to have to be there overnight, she drove all the way to Hope and back to Belfast- -and brought me my glasses, and medicine. She fed my cat. I remember clearly that I was sure I saw the face of Jesus in her.

So here's my thought—what would happen if we were to look for something we associate with Jesus, that reminds us of him, in those we love – those we don't know well---and in those we barely know?

What if instead of thinking we always need to *bring Jesus to people*—we understood that the Holy Spirit was already working on everyone we meet. And what if we tried to see what the Holy Spirit was doing in them? It might just be by a word or a gesture that reminds us of Jesus—like we see a slight resemblance to their parent in them. What if we affirmed that glimpse of God we see in them?

What if that glimpse helped us to connect with that part of God in them?

What would that do to how we viewed others?

Be known to us Lord Jesus. In each other. In the things others say and do.

And whenever we break bread—whether it's in our lovely church or at every meal—let's take a moment to reflect on what we are all about.

Love. It's all about who Love is and what Love does. It's about how we look for you in every single person around us.

Be known to us Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread, and in each other. Amen.