

### Third Sunday of Easter

On her first train trip, a little girl was put into an upper berth by her mother. The mother then assured her that Jesus would watch over her during the night. As the lights were switched off the girl became alarmed and called out softly: "Mom, are you there?" "Yes dear," her mother replied. A little later the child called in a louder voice: "Daddy, are you also there?" "Yes, was the reply. After this had been repeated several times, one of the passengers lost patience and shouted: "We're all here. Your father, your mother, your brothers and sisters and cousins, your uncles, and aunts – all are here. Now go to sleep!" There was silence for a while. Then, in a hushed voice the child asked: "Mom, was that risen Jesus traveling with us?"

Dear Friends,

The Diocese of Green Bay is on "Worship Jesus" years on the Discipleship Journey. It will continue for a couple of years. This first year, Bishop Ricken guides us to focus on the word of God in the Eucharist. Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist is the primary focus.

God came in search of humans. We are created in His image and likeness. He chose the people of Israel. However, they were not aware that God has chosen them. He made covenant with them. Finally, God came to the world as a human person. He came to His people. We can read in John's Gospel 1: 9-12, "The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through Him, but the world did not know Him. He came to what was His own, but His own people did not accept Him." God is in search of us always.

In today's liturgy, we heard the encounter stories of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. It was a beautiful encounter to open their hearts and minds to recognize Jesus. There is a common element in Jesus' appearance after resurrection, that Jesus appeared differently enough for them to prove his existence. It was essential to appear in that way. Jesus was miraculously both greatly different from before, and yet clearly the same person.

God's encounters are in an unexpected way. We can see this in the Bible. Gen 18:1-15 describes how Abraham, at Mamre, visited the Lord through three men who were unaware. 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. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up into the Temple. 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.

Today we encounter both the word and the Eucharist (His Body and Blood). They said to themselves, "were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" Luke 24: 32.

What is our encounter today? Are you able to recognize Jesus in the word? And in the Eucharist?

The encounter doesn't need to be the same. Archbishop William Lori says, "the voice of Jesus speaks to us on every page of scripture – even obscure passages of the Old Testament or the longest sentences in the letters of St. Paul."

Ask yourself: Do you believe that you encounter Jesus in the "Breaking of the bread" at Mass? Do you value the Eucharist by attending it, especially on Sunday?