



Creation Season

Third Sunday of Easter, Year A, April 6, 2008

Water: Flowing water, rivers/streams

Redeeming love flows from God like a stream

Information and Reflections for Homilists, Liturgists, and Clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota

There are several Themes for this Sunday:

Lectionary themes

Response of thanksgiving for salvation
Gospel theme: Road to Emmaus

Creation themes

Flowing water, rivers/streams
Redeeming love flows from God like a stream
Life as a journey
The effluent of our lives impacts others

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Acts 2: 2: 14a, 36-41
Psalm 116
1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

In the Gospel story of the Road to Emmaus the first seeing of the risen Christ occurs and that is the consistent focus of this reading. There is more, in the story, as in the whole Bible, richness in relationship with the whole of God's Creation.

The community they are walking to is so named because it is a place where there a hot mineral spring and therefore Emmaus – 'hot baths'. Even the names we give to places have their roots in relational reference.

These 2 Apostles, friends of Jesus, their friend has been killed and they are filled with grief. They are walking down a road and another joins them as they journey to Emmaus where friends and followers of the slain man reside.

They are walking! – On a road. Can or do we even walk today, together, on a road none the less?

Here are friends, moving within the society, discussing the big news of the day and expressing the depth of their despair. They are within the creation that their friend has expressed to them as a manifestation of God's Kingdom. The sandals on their feet, the cloths on their back, the coarse brown bread, the water that quenches their thirst, all that they need and desire have a direct and understandable relationship with this Creation.

The creation Jesus has been talking about and using to help in explaining all the ways that God Loves his people, All of Us.

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The road is a path, or at, best a cart trail, a place where the rocks and bushes have been cleared away, tossed aside so that a person with bare feet can walk and perhaps tend to a beast of burden as they walk along side. It is devoid of any ‘unnatural sounds’ – the crunch of their feet on the earth is heard, the wind, animals, perhaps a bird is singing and flowers are blooming.

They are surrounded by the elements that their teacher Jesus has used to describe God, so much so that the transition between the metaphors in the parables and this walk are not separated. They are in relationship with God, Earth, and each other – and many others, for news of the possible resurrection is moving through the people as a direct result of these rich and meaningful relationships.

For most of us – most of our day is at our work, with limited human relationship, or at our very private home, with the same interaction level. What can be described as social interaction is primarily in stores, shopping, or driving – to work or shopping, the vast majority of which could in no way be described as warm human interaction. We may want to add telephone time, hmm, rushed by the needs of the ‘next event’, or TV where we may absorb some manifestations of society and then parrot them back to our co-workers and family in a futile attempt to have meaningful social interaction. As for our relationship with earth, God’s supreme gift to us, I suspect that these two disciples clocked more time with nature in a week than we do in a year, perhaps two, and they probably do not grumble and groan about the discomfort the elements have inflicted upon them.

We have very little in common in our daily lives with the normal events of this day in the story about “The Road to Emmaus” in our modern lives, not to mention the clear and devastating effect of their teacher being killed and now.....? Yet if something were to happen to us that were of such gravity, would not the ups and downs of our daily lives have bearing on the event? Could we deal with it in relationships, with each other, would we have any context as to the persons of the event, their true heartfelt commitments, and their life through example?

It was not so many generations back that most of the people of God were in close daily relationship with the very events that these two fellows have. Our ancestors were in close relationship with each other, where their food came from, directly involved in their comfort – heating their homes, clothing production and inseparably committed to their spiritual lives. Perhaps they were not even literate, none the less their daily lives and church were knitted together.

Give me that old time religion; so many of us and in so many fractured ways look to the past good life, the leisure times, when food tasted good, and on and on. Yet we do not have a relationship with those very things that are foundational to that old time religion. Our bread is made of chemicals we can not pronounce, our greens come from 1000’s of miles away, and we have no relationship with the animals which provide their flesh. Among the most startling realities is that the concept of a drink of cool refreshing water, woven so totally into our Holy

The Minnesota Episcopal Environmental Stewardship Commission (MEESC) has prepared Creation Season materials for the Season of Easter, 2008, with a focus on water. If you find the information on this reflection to be of interest, you may wish to visit the MEESC website for more information (www.env-steward.com). Members of MEESC are available to visit your congregation to assist you and them in an environmental stewardship walk.

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Scriptures and all of our cultures is rapidly becoming a figment of a distant past; water the very stuff we symbolically use to bring a new member into the relationship with God and the Faith Community, just like the healthy, meaningful and enduring relationships we long for and need is becoming very scarce indeed!

Those elements of our past lifestyles are still at hand and are very much in need of paying attention to for we have disregarded them and abused them so much that we are having a monstrous destructive impact on them for us today, for our children yet to come and for all of Gods Creation on Earth.

We are called to come back into relationship with God – We are called RIGHT NOW!

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To contact MEESC, visit their website (www.env-steward.com/info/members.htm), call the Rev Tom Harries (contact information in the Diocesan Journal), or send a note to:

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