

## Known in the Breaking of the Bread

*Luke 24:13-35; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:51; Revelation 19:6-9; Revelation 22:1-2, 14*

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### What We Found

We walked the Emmaus road: two disciples with complete information about the resurrection and hope in the past tense, walking away from Jerusalem, until a stranger opened Moses and all the prophets and their hearts caught fire. His syllabus was ours: the garden, the priest-king, the lamb, the manna, the bread of the Face, the banquet foretold. This study never had its own method; it had his.

Then, at table, the guest became host: he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, the cadence we filed in a Galilean field and heard again in the upper room, and their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. The Bible's only other eye-opening meal was Eden's, its perfect mirror: eyes opened onto shame and hiding there; eyes opened onto God and a seven-mile run to tell, here. What eating broke, eating has healed. And he vanished at the moment of recognition, because his presence was changing address: what was visible in our Redeemer has passed over into the sacraments.

The recognition became the Church's rhythm, the breaking of the bread of Acts 2:42, and Paul told us what the meal does: a participation in the body and blood of Christ; one bread, one body. The Eucharist makes the Church. Heaven named the promised feast: the marriage supper of the Lamb, whose invitation the Mass has been quoting at us all our lives. And on the Bible's last page, the tree of life stands open, first door closed, last promise kept, with the living Bread standing between them saying: if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever (John 6:51). The meal was never part of the story. It was the story. Go to Mass with your eyes opened, and be known by him in the breaking of the bread.

### Voices of the Church

#### St. Augustine of Hippo

*Sermons on the Easter Season, 5th century*

St. Augustine returns for this study's last word from the Fathers, preaching on Emmaus: the Lord willed to be recognized in the breaking of the bread, he told his people, for our sake, who would not see him in the flesh and yet would eat his flesh. Their eyes were held on the road so that ours could be opened at the altar: what they learned in one evening, that he is known in the breaking of the bread, the Church has lived on ever since.

#### St. Leo the Great

*Sermon 74 (On the Ascension), 5th century*

St. Leo, preaching on the Ascension, gave the Church a sentence that this study has applied to the vanishing at Emmaus and everything after it: what was visible in our Redeemer has passed over into the sacraments (Sermon 74.2). The Lord did not withdraw his presence when he withdrew his visible form; he entrusted it to the sacramental life of the whole Church, so that faith, nobler than

sight, might find him everywhere the bread is broken.

### **St. John Paul II**

*Mane Nobiscum Domine, 2004*

St. John Paul II, in a letter named for the Emmaus plea, stay with us, Lord, wrote that the whole Church walks that road: hearts burning as the Scriptures are opened, eyes opened in the breaking of the bread. The two disciples' evening, he taught, is the shape of every Eucharist, Word then Sacrament, and the shape of the Christian life itself: we recognize him at the table, and like them, we cannot stay seated; we rise that same hour and go tell.

### **Live It This Week**

- 1.** Go to Mass this week, ideally with someone from this table, and attend it as Emmaus: the Scriptures opened, then the bread broken. At the words Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb, remember where the sentence comes from, and answer it.
- 2.** Make one visit to the tabernacle this week, outside of Mass, and sit with the Bread of the Presence for fifteen unhurried minutes. Bring nothing but the study in your bones.
- 3.** Within the month, tell the road story: walk one person through the single discovery from these twelve weeks that most opened your eyes, and let your heart burn out loud. Emmaus ends with a seven-mile run to tell; so does this study.

### **Scripture Memory Verse**

*"...he was known to them in the breaking of the bread."*

**Luke 24:35**

### **Where the Road Goes from Here**

There is no next session to prepare. There is a table, a few miles from your home, where everything this study found is waiting, this Sunday and every day. Go together if you can. And when your eyes are opened, do what the two disciples did: rise that same hour, and go tell someone.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1329; 1396*