

Reflection for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April.

Throughout the Easter Octave the Gospel for each day depicts one of the appearances of our risen Lord. Yesterday's Gospel was our risen Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene. Today we read of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and how our Lord made Himself known to them. One of the striking aspects of these appearances is the inability of the disciples to recognise Jesus. Mary Magdalene supposes Him to be the gardener, and of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus Saint Luke tells us "that something prevented them from recognising Him."

Why was this so? Were they so caught up in their grief and in the trauma of seeing our Lord die such a cruel death that they were totally unprepared for His rising from the dead?

Mary only recognised our Lord when He called her by her name. The two disciples only recognised Jesus in the intimate sharing of the "breaking of bread". It seems that for the resurrection of the Lord to really take a firm hold on us we must experience an intimate moment of encounter. At the moment we may feel that we are deprived of these intimate moments with our risen Lord as our Churches are closed and we are living in isolation. However our Lord continues to knock at the door of our hearts waiting for us to invite Him into our lives. Share with Him your hopes and fears, your joys and difficulties, all that is preventing you from recognising Him. Let Him speak your name as lovingly and encouragingly as only Jesus can. Quietly let Jesus call you by name so that His voice may find a loving response.

"The most necessary practice in the spiritual life is the practice of the presence of God, whereby the soul finds her joy and contentment in His companionship, talking humbly and lovingly to Him always. During our work and other activities we ought to stop, for a moment, as often as we can, in order to worship God in our hearts, to touch Him as it were by stealth as He passes. Since you know that God is with you in all your actions, then He is at the very depth and centre of your soul, why not then pause an instant in your external occupations, and even in your prayers, to worship Him inwardly, to praise Him, to petition Him, to offer Him your heart and to thank Him.""

(this last paragraph was sent to me by Father Anselm of Mount St. Bernard's Abbey.)