

Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 4/28/19

Monday – Read Luke 24:1-12. **Finding Hope at the Tomb.** It wasn't so much the empty tomb that gave them hope. They found hope in remembering Jesus' words. Remembering makes all the difference. Remembering God's presence in the past can help us deal with the present. They began to remember the stories Jesus told, the meals he shared, and the way he healed people. They remembered *how he told them, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.* And when they remembered, they had to tell others. You can't keep Good News to yourself. You just have to tell others your Good News. As you pray, ask God to help you share the Good News of Jesus' resurrection with the people in your life.

Tuesday – Read Luke 24:8-27 and Isaiah 52:13-53:12. **Walking with Jesus.** As they walked toward Emmaus, Cleopas and the other disciple were disappointed, disillusioned, and overwhelmed by despair, and then Jesus came near and walked with them. Jesus listened as they poured out their hearts, and then he showed them why *it was necessary for the messiah to suffer these things and then enter into his glory.* Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. Jesus comes and walks with us when we are disappointed, disillusioned, and overwhelmed by despair. As you pray, thank Jesus for walking with you through the most difficult times in your life.

Wednesday – Read Luke 24:28-35. **Made Known in the Breaking of the Bread.** Luke tells us that *he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.* We experience the presence of Jesus when we gather around the Lord's Table to receive Holy Communion. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed that we should receive Holy Communion as frequently as possible because it is a means of grace which is one of the ways that God offers us grace and love. Spend some time thinking about the way that Jesus is made known to you in the breaking of the bread. What makes Communion meaningful to you? Spend some time in prayer thanking God for the precious gift of Holy Communion.

Thursday – Read Luke 24:32-35; Mark 16:12-13. **Helping Others Find Hope.** Experiencing the Risen Christ changes us from the inside out. Mark's Gospel briefly mentions the story we find in Luke's Gospel. Both Mark and Luke tell us that these two disciples went and told the others about their encounter with the Risen Lord. After Jesus vanished, they said, *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"* When you experience the Risen Jesus you want to tell others the Good News that he is alive. One of the most important ways we help others find hope is by telling others the Good News of Jesus' resurrection. Telling others the Good News is at the heart of what we mean in our church when we talk about *connecting to the world by inviting people to come to church with you.* As you pray, think about the way God may be calling you to share this Good News with someone you know.

Friday – Read Luke 24:36-43 and John 20:19-23. **Overcoming Doubt.** None of the disciples believed in the resurrection until they experienced the risen Jesus, and Jesus wouldn't let his disciples stay stuck in doubt. Luke and John both tell us how Jesus came to them and helped them believe in his resurrection. He showed them the marks in his hands and feet so that they could see that the resurrected Lord was the crucified Jesus. He invited them to touch him, and he ate food with them so that they could see that he was not a ghost. How does it make you feel to know that we may experience doubt even on the road to faith? Ask Jesus to help you overcome any doubts you may have so that you may fully believe in his resurrection.

Saturday – Read Luke 24:43-53 and Romans 10:8-17. **You Are Witnesses.** Just as Jesus did on the road to Emmaus, he *opened their minds to understand the scriptures,* and he said to them, *"Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.* Jesus calls us to be witnesses. A witness simply tells what he or she has experienced or learned. We are often good at showing people our faith through our actions and in the ways that we serve in ministry. Our actions are a powerful witness about what we believe. Our words are also important. Paul stressed to the Roman church that it was vitally important for them to be able to tell others the Good News about Jesus. Many of us are afraid to tell others the Good News because we fear that we may not say the right things or we feel like we do not know enough. Spend some time praying for the Holy Spirit to help you share the Good News with someone you know.

Lectionary Readings: Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 150; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31.

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