

April 5, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

THEY KNEW IT WAS THE LORD

By Fr. David C. Robinson, SJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish. When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught.... Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord.

JOHN 21:4-10, 12

Reflection

As the disciples and other followers of Jesus were discovering the resurrected Jesus in a variety of locations, it became a source of mystery and surprise when these sightings occurred. It wasn't a matter of simple identification, where Jesus stepped up with hand extended, saying, "Hi. I'm Jesus. How are you?" The encounters were unexpected, often unsettling, but inevitably a revelation of God's presence in the post-resurrection world. We can easily surmise that there was a variety of conjectures about the significance of such a confounding occurrence. Was this the coming of the Kingdom on Earth, the End of Days, or some miraculous preamble to God's new way of moving with humans on the planet?

When the apocalyptic fever of these appearances began to wane, the communities came to recognize the subtle ways in which God's appearance was manifest through the memories and discernment of Jesus living within the lives of the faithful. It was not simply a matter of physical or visionary experience. Rather, the generations of believers came to realize that the resurrection was part of the new life in the Spirit that was emerging in a manner that was no longer dependent on 'doubting Thomas' sorts of manifestations. When new generations came to cherish the awareness of Jesus as a living companion on their spiritual journey, they could respond, as did the original disciples, "It is the Lord!" We, in our own paths of prayer and ministry, are reminded of that same companioning life that Peter and Paul, and multitudes since, have experienced in their walks of faith. It is more than a sighting, a visionary conversation, or a matter of physical contact. It is the intimate connection to, and compassionate relationship with, the One who lived, died, and rose in fulfillment of God's promise to all humanity throughout time. As we grow in compassion, wisdom, discernment, and love, we come to realize the miracle of our very being, not simply as disciples, but also as the miraculous presence of a life that shared a godliness beyond life and death. With boundless gratitude and innocent wonder, we affirm the truth of our selves as we proclaim, "It is the Lord."







"The Ascension," St. Michael's Abbey, Silverado, CA
Photo by Fr. David C. Robinson, SJ

For Pondering

- What does it mean to you to say that Jesus lives in you always?
 - How do you recognize the living presence that astounded the disciples and empowered them to live with freedom and courage?
 - How have you experienced God present in your knowledge of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?
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