

Reflections While Walking The Fifth Luminous Mystery

Aware that his time was nearing the end and He would no longer be present to His disciples as He has been, Jesus leaves them a gift to make up for His absence. In the upper room, as they partake of the Passover meal, Jesus pronounces words that will forever keep Him present among His followers. He assures them that He will always be with them, body and blood, soul, and divinity, in the ordinary elements of bread and wine. The response of the apostles to Jesus' amazing and what had to be puzzling words is not recorded in scripture. There is no indication that the significance of the gift that Jesus was leaving them was understood by those present at the Last Supper. How could they? Although Jesus had told them He would not be with them much longer and the future was uncertain and foreboding Jesus was still physically present with them.

It is in Jesus' encounter with the travelers on the Emmaus road that the full mystery of the gift that He intended to leave is revealed. Cleopas and his companion had been discussing the tragic events of the previous days and the rumors of Jesus' missing body when they meet someone they don't recognize. Before agreeing to share a meal with them the stranger explains the necessity of the Messiah having to suffer for scripture to be fulfilled. Schooled in the idea of a suffering Messiah, they gather to eat. Jesus blesses the bread, breaks it as He was broken on the cross and the Messiah becomes immediately known to Cleopas and his companion.

It is at Emmaus that we learn the Eucharist is not only a meal at which Jesus is present, but also a commemoration of Jesus' suffering and death. It is in the fifth Luminous Mystery of the Rosary that we have the opportunity to reflect more completely on the precious gift of Eucharist that Jesus left us.