

Homily for the Third Sunday of Easter “B”
April 25-26, 09

Today, we are shown how important the Eucharist is in connecting us to the living Christ and to one another as the household of God.

The disciples recognized the resurrected Jesus alive among them *only after* they began the celebration of the Eucharist. “In the breaking of the bread” they recognized Jesus in their midst.

Before their encounter with Jesus, they were sad and detached, wandering to the city of Emmaus, seemingly without purpose, they seem to have lost their heads, they had no understanding. But once Jesus connects them to himself in the Eucharist, they are filled with excitement and enthusiasm. They run back to their brothers and sisters and recount the wonderful news that Jesus is alive and he has sent them out to continue his work.

They found a connection to their brothers and sisters and to the mission of Jesus. Here is the beginning of the Church. The body now has a head to guide it and direct it’s life.

The Eucharist is the most important binding factor in the life of the Church. It is what connects us to the heart and the life of Jesus. This is so true that only those who are connected to the Eucharist retain the apostolic faith.

We can be confident that the same faith and teaching that was given to the Apostles is given to us. If we are to hope for eternal life, know Jesus, the Son of the Living God and understand the promise of Salvation, we must actively participate in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is an

important truth that all the power of Christ's life comes to us from the Eucharist.

For any Christian community to have a future, it must be connected to the faith and teaching of the Apostles. We must be bound to our Bishop, because, it is through our Bishop that we are connected in a direct line of succession to the Apostles.

The successor of the Apostles among us is Archbishop Brunett. He was Ordained Bishop by a Bishop who can trace his line of ordination back to one of the original eleven Apostles. For any Church to survive, it must be connected to the same church Jesus shared the Eucharist with at the last supper. It must be bound to the same disciples Jesus broke bread with on the road to Emmaus.

One of the things that define us as a Catholic People is our connection to Christ and his teaching through the line of succession of our Bishops. Our Bishops connect us to the head of the Church, Jesus Christ.

The Gospel shows us how central the Eucharist is to our belief in the risen Christ. We must continue Christ's work to build God's Kingdom in this generation and proclaim it with enthusiasm to the next generation. We can only do that authentically if we are united to and supportive of our Bishop who connects us to the faith of the Apostles.

One of the ways that we invest in our Church's work and its future is by supporting the Annual Catholic Appeal.

I have asked Gary Edmundson to tell you about why this important appeal should be of interest to each one of us.