

“Stay with us, because it is almost evening” (Luke 24:29)

This was the request made to the stranger, whom two companions travelling together had met on the road from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus. They had been “talking and discussing” what had happened in the city a few days before. This man seemed to be the only person who did not know anything about it, so they told him of “a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people”, in whom they had placed their trust. He had been handed over to the Romans by their chief priests and leaders, condemned to death and crucified.¹ They could not make sense of such a devastating tragedy.

As they walked along together, the stranger helped the two of them understand the meaning of all that had happened by referring to the Scriptures. This rekindled hope in their hearts. When they reached Emmaus, they urged him to join them for supper, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening”. When he was at table with them, he blessed the bread and shared it with them. As he did it, they recognised Him: the Crucified One who had died was now risen! Immediately the two of them changed their plans and went back to Jerusalem to find the other disciples and tell them the great news.

We too can be disappointed, appalled and discouraged by a terrible sense of powerlessness in the face of injustices done to defenceless innocent people. Our own lives too are not without pain, uncertainties and darkness. We so much want to transform it all into peace, hope and light for ourselves and others. Do we want to meet Someone who can profoundly understand us and cast light on our journey through life?

Jesus, the Man-God, freely accepted experiencing the tunnel of suffering that we experience. He did this to be sure of reaching each one of us in the depths of our own situation. He experienced physical suffering, but also inner suffering: from betrayal by his friends to feeling abandoned² by God, whom he had always called Father. His unshakeable faith in God’s love helped him overcome this immense suffering by entrusting himself once more to God,³ and he received new life from Him.

He has brought all of us onto this same path and wants to accompany us. “He is there in everything which has to do with suffering. Let’s try to recognise Jesus in all our anxieties and difficult situations, in all the darkness, in our own personal tragedies and those of our neighbours and in the sufferings of people around us. These sufferings are His, because He has made them His own. It would be enough to do something practical to ease “His” sufferings in the poor ... to find a new fullness of life”.⁴

A little girl aged seven shared her experience, “I was very sad when my daddy was sent to prison. I loved Jesus in him, so when we went to visit, I didn’t cry in front of him.” A young wife said,

¹Cf. Lk 24:19ff

²Cf. Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34

³Cf. Lk 23:46

"I accompanied my husband Robert through the last months of his life, after the doctors give him no hope of recovery. I never left him for a moment. Seeing him, I saw Jesus. Robert was on the cross, really on the cross." Their reciprocal love became a source of light for their friends, who were drawn into a whirlwind of solidarity, which did not wind down but spread out to others, giving rise to an association for social development, 'Abbraccio Planetario'-(Planetary Embrace). One of these friends said, "The experience we had with Robert inspired us to follow him on a real journey towards God. We often ask ourselves the meaning of suffering, illness and death. I believe all of us who had the gift of sharing a part of the journey alongside Robert have received a very clear answer".

This month all Christians celebrate the mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection. It is a chance to rekindle our faith in God's love, which allows us to transform suffering into love. Each detachment, separation, failure, and even death itself, can become for us a fount of light and peace. Sure of how close God is to each one of us, whatever our situation, let's continue to say with faith the prayer of the disciples at Emmaus, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening".

Letizia Magri

Dear Friends,

There will be Word of Life meetings as follow;

Date : April 9, 2017 (Sunday)

Time : 2:00—3:30 p.m.

Venue: GELATO SOLE

No.633, Kawe Chan(1) St., West Gyo Gone, Insein T/S, Yangon

Date : April 9, 2017 (Sunday)

Time : 8:30—10:30 a.m.

Venue: St. Jude's Church

Date : April 9, 2017 (Sunday)

Time : 8:00—9:30 a.m.

Venue: St. Augustine's Church

Date : April 9, 2017 (Sunday)

Time : 2:00—4:00 a.m.

Venue: Focolare House

No. 148(B), Thirimingalar St, 8 miles,

*Mariapolis
Mawlamyine*

Holy Family Cathedral, Upper Road

April 29, 30 - May 1

Welcome to

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