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Biblical reflection

## MEMORY, IDENTITY AND CHRISTIAN MISSION

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«...They set out at once and went to Jerusalem...»  
(Lk 24:33).

We shall join Jesus and His disciples on their journey, letting ourselves be guided, in three ways, by the Word of the Scriptures:

1. in renewing our memory,
2. in rediscovering our Christian identity
3. in bettering the understanding of our mission within the family of the Catholic Church.

Thus, we will become witnesses of the Hope of the Resurrection in the world and able to motivate others to discover the joy of the returning towards «The Heavenly Jerusalem».

### **1. Listening to the Word reactivates our memory**

«Was not it necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into His Glory?» (Lk 24:26).

Despite the temporal apprehension that is always waiting for spectacular visible changes in society, Jesus shows that in order to change the world one must begin with an inner change in the way of thinking (*meta-noeo*), in a change of «our own interior world» in our own scale of values (see *Spe salvi* n.4).

Is it not true that the obstacle to faith is to be found within us, within our heart?

How many times the word of the Scriptures, which we hear and pray over, passes by without touching our souls, without changing our lives as believers? As Pope Benedict says, the real crises of faith is in fact a crises of hope which has to motivate our faith. (cf. *Spe salvi* n.17).

Let us decide to receive the Holy Word with an open heart so that it may come and once more enkindle hope in our souls. The Word of the Scripture should remind us of the Divine Plan and of God's Redemption and should instil in us a new impulse which arouses new hope in our souls.

### **2. The celebration of the mystery reveals the presence, confirms the identity**

«While He was at table with them, he took the bread, he blessed it and breaking it, he shared it with them». (Lk 24:30).

The presence of Jesus was revealed at the breaking of bread. Many times, we too fail to recognise Him on our earthly pilgrimage. It is important that we participate attentively in Holy Mass and that we try to receive Holy Communion as worthily as possible in order to strengthen our Christian identity.

Let us ask ourselves as to how we attend Holy Mass.

What are the prayers and the devotions by which we try to strengthen our Christian identity? Are we genuine «eucharistic people» (John Paul II)? Is the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, the Eucharistic Mystery, the centre of our Christian life?

### **3. Living the presence that transforms us into witnesses of the hope of Resurrection and renews our mission**

«They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven» (cf. Lk 24:33).

The central point of the whole passage is the supper at Emmaus, the moment of «the breaking of bread». For us too, even today in the Church during Mass, this is the moment when our eyes of faith should be opened and when our spiritual life should be filled with new hope. Thus we will be able to renew our

spiritual identity and to remind ourselves as to *who we really are* in the light of the Mystery of Christ's Resurrection. We do not only attend the Eucharist celebration when the bread is broken, but we also participate actively in this great Mystery.

So, let us ask ourselves as to *where our place* in the Church and in the society is today? Where does Jesus want us to be? And as such, what *should we do* to direct our life of faith according to the Plan of the Divine Wisdom?

Let us ask the Risen Lord to accompany each one of us on the way to the «Heavenly Jerusalem» and tell him, just like the disciples on the way to Emmaus: «*Stay with us, o, Lord, as the evening is coming and enlighten us by Thy word and presence on our way to the Heavenly Jerusalem! Amen*».

«And may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith, so that in the power of the Holy Spirit you may be rich in hope » (Rm 15:13).

Christ is amongst us! He is and always will be!