

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## NOT GIVING UP

Dear Parish Family:

This past week, I was asked to work with a new client by the group home where I volunteer. This person does not live there. He is convinced he does not need to live there, even though he might meet all of the criteria for living there! I agreed and we met for the first time this week.

We spent some time talking and he shared how he could not stand the first step of 12 step recovery. I do not want to give up, he said. That's what all this powerlessness is about. My life has not been easy, but I am not giving up.

I just listened and let the person talk. When he was finished, I asked him what the word "surrender" meant to him. He was sort of quiet. We had a great conversation about the word surrender. I'm not sure he's in any better place but maybe something for us to talk about if we meet again.

Moving to surrender is a sign of hope. The gospel today shows us this.

Think about Jesus encountering these disciples on the road to Emmaus. They have given up. "We had been hoping," they say. They were done, literally walking away from Jerusalem. There, Jesus meets them. What does he do? Through the Scriptures, the breaking of the bread and through the encounter with him, they move to a place of surrender. They don't give up. In a sense, they give in to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I worry sometimes that we have given up. I feel I have sometimes. In my own life, sure. Maybe you too. We speak ourselves down. Convince ourselves we will never be free of this sin or that secret. And how quickly that can translate beyond us, no? We see the violence and destruction of war without clear and just reason. We see a pope attacked and poorly defended by many. We see tenants of and practices of our faith mocked, i.e. "wish he (the pope would take his little biscuits or Wafers or

whatever you people eat and go somewhere else". We see our immigrant brothers and sisters battling on so many levels (don't be fooled by not seeing a lot of information in the news). We see more and more people overwhelmed by a need for food and for financial resources. It is so easy to give up. Not to surrender.

This is why we come here on Sunday. Like the disciples in the Gospel we come with our hopes and dreams and, yes, we come with our "we had been hoping" moments too. This is true. We do here what the disciples did with the risen and glorified Christ. We encounter him and he encounters us. So at each Eucharist, we break open the word. We share the meal. We go forth to preach to others about the difference Christ makes.

I doubt the disciples in today's Gospel had it all figured out. I imagine there were still some questions, maybe even some doubts and uncertainty about where all of this was going. But something was different. They surrendered in confidence recognizing that the resurrection of Jesus Christ changes everything.

I am not sure the new person I will work with is ready to reach that place of surrender. I'm not sure I am either. Maybe the same for you. Let's pray that these Easter days will bring us further along the path to surrender, to remembering that the resurrection changes everything.

Please pray for me. I promise the same.



P.S. Don't forget - we are still praying with our Lent/Easter journals - Love Without Limits. Each day offers another reflection about Dilexi Te and how we can live this out in our lives. If you have lost your journal, you can go online or stop by the office for an abbreviated copy.