



Renew My Church: Seven Signs of Mission Vitality

“We encounter Christ and receive nourishment through prayer and worship”

Reflection on the Third Sunday of Easter

Renew My Church is an Archdiocesan initiative that recognizes a parish “strives to evangelize its members to live more fully as intentional disciples.”

One way of doing this is to reflect on, take to heart, and enact Gospel messages. Today is the Third Sunday of the Easter Season. The Gospel reading is the Road to Emmaus. The story is about an unrecognized Jesus walking with two disciples and teaching them the truth about himself and, consequently, the truth about themselves as his followers. (Lk. 24:13-35)

Among its many messages, this story urges us to understand the crucial moment of recognition, when the disciples finally grasp who their companion on the road is.

And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.

Jesus is the one who can take his embodied life like bread and give thanks to the Father/Source of this life (bless it). Then he can break this life and give it to others so they can take it inside themselves and grow strong on it, as a person can eat bread and grow strong on the bread.

Whenever we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, we become the Body and Blood of Christ. We take the life of Christ into ourselves and grow strong on that life. “Growing strong” in turn translates into living out the convictions and values of the Gospel in the relationships of our work, family, neighborhood, and society.

When this happens, we participate in what **Renew My Church** names as one of the seven signs of parish vitality. “We encounter Christ and receive nourishment through prayer and worship ... with the Eucharist as the “Source and the Summit.”

