

***More than central heating!***

*Acts 2<sup>14a,36-41</sup>; Psalm 116<sup>1-3,10-end</sup>; 1 Peter 1<sup>17-23</sup>; Luke 24<sup>13-35</sup>*

*That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem. (Luke 24<sup>33</sup>)*

Faith isn't just about you and I feeling good but about the proclamation of good news.

The Psalmist may be guilty of advocating a far too cosy notion that faith is just about God and us. In the verses we read "I", 'me' or my' is used 21 times. This 1500 year-old Psalm seems very modern, where so much in the world centres around 'me' and what matters seems to be is that 'I' feel good about myself or the world in which 'I' live.

Please don't get me wrong: personal faith is vital and important Peter tells us how important: **you were ransomed... with the precious blood of Christ.** You and I matter so much to God, yes, as individuals, that Jesus lived, loved and died for us. The resurrection gave Peter the confidence to tell the people assembled that, when they asked what they should do, Peter said simply: **repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

We have the opportunity coming up with the Confirmations for any here who have not already done so to be baptised and for the Bishop to pray that you will receive the Holy Spirit - this is a special moment and a great way to make your public declaration of faith.

But, please note, that the Gospel passage doesn't end with the invitation to Jesus, **stay with us.** It moves through the disciples experiencing the Risen Jesus in teaching and in broken bread - which is what we reasonably expect to happen in Church - to a passion to tell others.

**Were not our hearts burning within us** isn't just spiritual central-heating, but the fire that fuels Christians into sharing what they have come to know about Jesus.

The challenge that I face as a Parish Priest preaching each week is that, if my sermons are to do any more than make you feel good or bad, affirmed or challenged; if they are to make a difference then I have to be practical and do more than just set the challenge to share your faith: I, together with you, have to find honest and achievable ways of doing so.

The answer, as it plays is, is in the text before us.

- ✦ In the upper room, having rushed back the 7 miles from Emmaus to Jerusalem, they found the disciples already rejoicing in the resurrection. **They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon.**
- ✦ Here is the bit for us: **Then they told what had happened on the road.** They told their story!
- ✦ That's what we have to do. Just tell our story of how God's love has embraced us; of how through Jesus we have found forgiveness; of how the fact of the resurrection has given us hope.

We have the challenge to grow the Church and there isn't a short-cut to doing this beyond having a faith that matters to us; living that faith with integrity; and sharing with those around us and with those we love how vital that faith is to us.

My grannie famously went to visit relatives on his side of the family just after my grandfather had died. As we drove away from their home in north London she sat, grasping her handbag on her knee, and pronounced: *They did enjoy seeing me!*

After worship today will you walk away and say, *God did enjoy seeing me,* or do you share the news of resurrection: will you tell your story?