

## 2021 04 18 – Taking a Sacred Pause

**Luke 24:36b-48** (The Inclusive Bible)

Two of Jesus's disciples, a man named Cleopas and one other, had just returned to Jerusalem and were telling the rest of Jesus' followers about what had happened on the road to Emmaus. They were telling how they had met a stranger on the road, how they had invited him to eat with them and how, as he broke the bread, they suddenly recognized their rabbi, Jesus. Jesus, of course, had died on the previous Friday, so this encounter was very strange. The two disciples were struggling to explain it.

And it was then, as they were telling this mysterious story, that Jesus appeared among them. Jesus' disciples were, of course, terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost. So Jesus said, "Look at me. Touch me. Give me something to eat. Know that I am real." And the disciples, joyful, disbelieving and wondering watched as he ate a piece of cooked fish.

I know that many of us, myself included, struggle with the idea of a bodily resurrection. Many scholars have argued over this question. I tend to agree with Walter Breuggeman, who wrote:

The two stories taken together indicate that Jesus' presence is mysterious but real. It eludes human perception; and yet is not human fabrication...

The event is more than a resuscitation of the flesh; it is a resurrection

*(Texts for Preaching, pg 295).*

The way I understand it, to be resuscitated, is to be brought back to life in the same form. In contrast, resurrection is about new life, a new form, a different way of being. With resurrection comes transformation.

God's Creation has much to teach us about resurrection. We all know that the seed must die in order for the plant to grow, that the caterpillar must disappear into a cocoon in order for the butterfly to emerge, and that tadpoles must stop swimming in order for the frog to jump. Resurrection, transformation, rebirth is part of the cycle of life that maintains the planet on which we live.

A week ago I shovelled compost from the bottom of a bin. Compost that was the result of months of decomposition. Compost that started as dry leaves, cut grass, vegetable peelings and coffee grounds. Compost that will now feed a garden of new vegetables.

On this planet Earth we are surrounded by the beauty and the power of resurrected life. We have been gifted with a diversity of ecosystems that is so awesome it is nearly impossible to fathom. Biologists spend their entire lives exploring a single minute part of one of these ecosystems. Like the disciples we can feel joy, disbelief and wonder each time we encounter another example of the Holy Mystery's resurrecting power.

But most of us spend too much of our lives unaware of what surrounds us. We become so wrapped up in our daily tasks that we often fail to recognize and appreciate the sacredness of God's creation and the beauty of resurrected life.

When the disciples encountered the resurrected Christ, he invited them to see, to touch and together they smelled and tasted the food that had been prepared.

Today, I am inviting each one of us to use our senses to see and to know the wonder of creation. To take a sacred pause in our lives so that we can also appreciate the wonder of new life. I'm going to be using a resource that was created by people involved in a initiative called [For the Love of Creation](#). This new initiative brings together Canadian faith communities and faith-based organizations to advance meaningful responses to our current climate crisis. As a first step they have created a resource called [Take a Sacred Pause](#).

### Sense

So let's take a pause. It's better to do this outside, but today's weather is not cooperating, so we will do this indoors. I invite you now to use your senses. Use as many senses as you can. Notice the sounds and smells around you. Look wide. Look soft.

Choose something from the natural world and look close. It might be something that you deliberately added to your worship space this morning. Or something else that is around you in your home. If you can, touch it. Feel it with your skin, your bones, your muscles.

As you experience this element of creation, notice your breathing. Notice any reactions you might be sensing in yourself: alertness, curiosity, fear, restlessness, attraction, distraction.

Notice all that you can about It —its colours, shapes, textures.

### Appreciate

Appreciate what it is offering to you in this moment. Appreciate it for simply being itself. Acknowledge and give thanks for this gift of the Creator, this gift of Creation. I invite you to speak your gratitude silently, out loud or to take a moment and type your gratitude in the chat. And I will read what you are typing. What is it about this particular element of nature that makes you grateful?

*(Wait for people to type)*

### Connect

Now that we have expressed our gratitude let's make a connection with this piece of creation. Is there a story, a teaching or an image that this element brings to mind? Think about who or what depends on this element. Maybe we do, or the birds, or animals or the earth itself. How does it give? On what or on whom does it depend? How does it take or receive?

Consider any threats to its safety. What will become of it in a day, a year, 10 years or 1000 years? How will threats such as climate change, severe weather patterns or other man-made changes impact it?

### Respect

Now think of how you relate to this element. How do your actions or inactions impact this part of Creation? How do you show care and respect for this

element? Are there other actions you could take or will take to protect, to heal, to honour, or cherish this one small part of nature?

### Express

I invite you now to show your appreciation and respect by making an offering = you could do this with words, a prayer, a song, a bow, a lit candle even a dance. You could offer water, tobacco, a sacred herb, or even a lock of your hair. I invite you now to take an intentional action in this moment to express your love and respect for this unique and precious part of creation. If you using words, prayer or part of song, feel free to share them on Chat.

### Delight

Finally, as we leave this Sacred Pause, allow the feelings and sensations to deepen in you. Delight in the connections that you noticed, or the concern that you felt. You may want to take time later to do more reflection using silence, arts, journaling or other methods.

And know that this Sacred Pause is something that you can do over and over again in your daily living. Whether you are working, playing or resting, whether you are in your home, in the yard, on a walk or a drive in the countryside, I invite you to pause every once in a while in order to sense, to appreciate, to connect, to respect, to express and to delight, in order to truly experience and to feel the new life, the resurrecting joy and the transforming love that can be found in God's Creation. May it be so. Amen.