

Rewriting history



Stained-glass window in Elzenveld Chapel, Antwerp, Belgium

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Zephaniah 3:14-end,
Psalm 116:1-3. 10-end and Luke 24:13-35

The story from Luke is familiar – two disciples, heartbroken and grieving, trudge along the road from Jerusalem, the city which three days earlier had been the scene of so much drama. The small religious cult that Cleopas and his companion belonged to had been firmly, irrevocably quashed when their leader was unjustly tried, tortured and put to a brutal death. It was all over.

Now the two men are bound for Emmaus – perhaps looking to get away from the chaos of the city, or possibly they're afraid for their own safety. Whatever the reason for their journey, their dejection is palpable. When a stranger draws alongside, Cleopas tells him they'd hoped that Jesus would be "the one to redeem Israel". It's one of the darker moments in the New Testament.

How wonderful, then, that the unimaginable joy they're about to experience will spring from the very source of their despondency. It's summed up by Fr Denis McBride in his book *The Road to Emmaus and Beyond*. He writes: "The past is not dead; it lingers on as a resource for meaning or it waits for new interpretation." I love the idea that, far from being fixed in history, the past changes through our reinterpretation – the realisation that, even in the darkest moments, when no redemption or resurrection seemed remotely possible, all the while God was alongside us in the darkness of the dungeon. As the writer of the book of Zephaniah proclaims: "the Lord, is in your midst"! 🍷

Lord, who walked alongside his disciples in their grief and reinvented the past for them, turning tragedy into triumph, strengthen our faith, to know that you are in the midst of everything in our lives, too. Amen.

Keeping Easter alive

by Katharine Smith

*"The weatherman says clear today /
He doesn't know you've gone away, /
And it's raining, raining in my heart."
(Buddy Holly, 1956)*

If the intense emotions that assailed us over Holy Week still remain with us, it might be worth giving them deeper consideration. What is happening in our lives that might trigger such strong feelings? Are we still grieving for someone or something we lost a long time ago?

Or has something happened more recently? If we can identify why it's raining in our hearts, maybe we can reach out to the risen Lord Jesus knowing that he has conquered death. Despite the weather, we can picture ourselves being held close and comforted by eternal Love himself.

And most importantly, we don't have to hide our pain behind a false Easter happiness. These things take time and it's okay for it to be raining in our hearts. 🍷

“Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.”

Martin Luther (1483-1546), German theologian, composer and priest

Walking with Rosie

Patience

by Gillian Cooper

Rosie and I are meeting some friends at the station. They are coming on a visit. But there has been a mix-up about the train times and we are much too early. We walk around the town, but Rosie gets tired and bored – it is getting close to tea time! So we retreat to the station to wait. Rosie has a treat, then settles on the floor to doze. I read on my phone until the battery gets

low. Then I sit and think about waiting.

I'm really bad at it. But, I realise, God must be really good. Think how patient God must be, waiting for me to pay attention and get what God wants for me. And how patient God must be with the world, waiting for it to get the message, for people to recognise Jesus; not forcing the issue, but waiting, waiting... giving us the freedom to find the truth for ourselves. 🍷