

Spiritually Speaking
 Father Thankachan Joseph



As the title says, the theme of this 3rd Sunday of Easter is "Risen Christ Encounters the Troubled Ones." Are we troubled, anxious, or worried, as we see in this Sunday's Gospel reading? The first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles, in which we see the courageous witness of Peter in the temple area. Peter, whom we had noticed as so timid and frightened during the Holy week readings, now recalls salvation history once again to the people who gathered to witness the great miracle of the cure of the crippled man in the temple area. The reading concludes with the core idea of repentance.

The Gospel reading is the continuation of the experience of the two disciples who are returning from Jerusalem to their hometown of Emmaus, following Christ's untimely death. These two disciples are returning to their hometown with broken hearts, feeling disappointments and hopelessness. I am sure that the whole world is now almost in the same situation of these two disciples, experiencing the same feelings of distress, fear, mental disturbances, dissatisfaction, disappointment, anxiety, fear. The Risen Lord invites all to reflect, as Isaiah says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways" (Is 55:8). The Emmaus journey and its various stages follow:

Walking away from Peace to trouble: In the first part of the Emmaus description, we see the two disciples of Christ make a trip back from Jerusalem, which was known as the place of peace, to their native town, Emmaus, the place of hot springs. They are walking away from Jerusalem, for they feel it is not safe to stay there because of all that happened with the crucifixion of Jesus the Nazarene. From the place of peace, they are moving to troubles.

Caring Stranger's accompaniment: The Gospel of Matthew concludes with these words, "And I will be with you always, to the end of ages" (28:20). The Lord is always faithful to His promises. We, as human as we are, make promises to the Lord, though we are not able to keep our promises. Even if we walk away from Him like the wounded animal about which Francis Thomason describes in his poem "Hound of Heaven," the Lord chases us and follows us to console and comfort us. The Lord has given us the sacraments and the Holy Scriptures as sources of encountering Him in our troubled moments. Usually when we face difficulties and problems, we have a tendency to walk away from Him and look for comfort and solace somewhere else. Like the Hound of Heaven, He accompanies us, as we have noticed in the episode of the disciples of Emmaus. The Lord never leaves us to wander or stroll. He explained the whole scriptures to them, but their hearts were locked up or closed, they could not recognize Him.

Recognizing the Lord, in the Breaking of the Bread: But the disciples did recognize the Lord in the breaking of the bread at the dining table, and the Lord left us a memorial of Him in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. Do we recognize Him in the sacraments that we receive frequently? Do we experience His comforting presence in those sacraments we receive? In the Emmaus experience, the Lord is, in fact, testing the disciples about their scriptural knowledge. The Lord cures so many people in the four Gospels. You can every day share one the healing miracles of Jesus Christ with family or friends and become a witness of Jesus Christ. How has the post-pandemic situation helped us to grow in the Risen Christ? It will be a nice habit to share with your family or friends some healing miracles of Jesus Christ.

Let us place ourselves in the company of those who first heard the words of the two from Emmaus. Let us place ourselves in the company of those who evangelize others by word and deed. Let us walk and talk with those who serve the poor and needy in the name of Christ. Let us walk and talk with those who serve the children or those outsiders who seek Christ. For Christ walks with us when we serve others. During this ongoing Easter season, while spending lots of time with our dear ones at home, read the scriptures, share what we read and meditate and become witnesses of Christ, as Peter and John did. Alleluia! Jesus truly is risen!

ASA and circuit court updates

-Continued from PAGE ONE site being considered is the fairgrounds, while other locations are being evaluated as viable alternatives.

Regarding the appointment of an assistant county administrator, final interviews have taken place, and the candidates are currently under review. Jensen estimated that it would take another 45-60 days for the selected candidate to start in the position.

Commissioner Sykes

inquired about the timeline for the circuit court building. Jensen stated that the only timeframe requirement is for the project to be completed by the end of 2026. He expressed his anticipation of construction beginning next spring, despite the slight delay caused by the additional site inspections. Jensen also mentioned the possibility of requesting an extension or additional funding from the State if needed.

Morrow County RP to meet April 11th

The Morrow County Republicans will meet at 6:30 pm, Thursday, April 11th at the Government Building, Irrigon, Oregon. PCPs and anyone interested in the county Republican Party are encouraged to come and join the discussions.

The Primary Election will be in May. All registered voters are encouraged to check their voter registration status at the Secretary of State's website <https://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/myvote.aspx?lang=en> as soon as possible. Click on the «Go to My Vote Now» button.

"This is particularly important since Oregon has incorporated voter registration with driver's license/registration. The MCRP PCPs have helped people check their voter registration status through the SOS's website, and many have found that they are not registered as they think they should be. Now is the time to check your status before the primary election ballots are sent out. This will help ensure that you receive the correct ballot" said Chairman, Clint Carlson.

WCCC Sunday Men's Play

Twenty-one participated in men's play on Sunday April 7th at Willow Creek Country Club. The event included breakfast, a quick meeting, reminder of Wednesday sign up, and a 3-man blind-man draw scramble. Results are as follows:

Net: 1st Curt Day, Mike Doherty, Rick Johnston. 2nd Tim Hedman, Kelly Fox, David Gunderson

Gross: 1st Dennis Peck, Duane Disque, David Allstott. 2nd Tim Wright, Rod

Wilson, Dave Pranger
 The next men's play will be April 14th. Hosting this event will be Jim Swanson, Scott Burright, and Tom Wolff. If you plan on participating in the Wednesday night team play, please sign up by next Sunday. The sign-up sheet is in the clubhouse.

The MCRP Central Committee will finalize plans for the Candidates Forum to be held on May 4th. This will be at the Lexington School from 10am-noon as part of the Lexington May Day celebration activities. Planning will also include discussions for the Summer Fund Raiser to be held on Saturday, June 22, 2024.

Precinct Committee Person, PCP, positions are open for Heppner, Boardman, and Irrigon. Individuals interested in one of these positions are encouraged to attend this meeting to learn about the positions. PCP appointments can be made during MCRP meetings. PCPs will get training and materials for "Precinct walks" which will take place in April.

The Republican Party is open to individuals interested in conservative ideals and values. The Republican Party platform can be found at <https://oregon.gop/>. For more information on the Morrow

County Republican Party, contact mocoreps@gmail.com.

MC Fair Board open seats

Morrow County is seeking applications from individuals interested in serving on the County's Fair Board. The Fair Board oversees and administers the Morrow County Fair. The Fair is a tradition of over 100 years and is a major event that brings people from around the County and surrounding areas. This past year's Fair livestock auction raised nearly \$800,000 for youth in the community. Membership on the board includes reviewing and adopting standards and policies governing the conduct of the Fair and Rodeo; and other entities associated with the operation of such, review and input on the annual budget for these

events and assisting with the successful execution of Fair events. Regular meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Meeting locations alternate between Heppner and Boardman. The committee term length is four years.

Letters of interest must be received by Friday, May 24. Please submit letters to Valerie Ballard, vballard@co.morrow.or.us or by regular mail, Morrow County Board of Commissioners, P.O. Box 788, Heppner, OR 97836. For additional information or questions, please contact Sue Gibbs, at (541) 256-6036.

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THE MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS A VACANCY

The Board currently has a vacancy that will be filled by appointment. Interested parties should complete the board application and return to community@moco hd.org no later than April 22, 2024.

The Board will conduct a preliminary review of applications during the April 29, 2024 meeting and may choose to appoint an applicant at that time.

Applicants are encouraged to fully complete the board application and to review the District's Board Governance Manual. Both of these documents are available at HealthyMC.org

Questions about the vacant position may be directed to Emily Roberts at emilyr@moco hd.org.



MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT
 Excellence in Healthcare

DEADLINE: MONDAYS AT 5PM

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