Seeing the Other
Luke 24:30-31
Cathy Ross

Luke 24:30-31

Bible Passage

Then their eyes were opened, then they received the gift of sight - to see Jesus for who He is – our Saviour, Redeemer and Friend. The gift of sight is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Our eyes have to be opened to recognise Jesus Christ, just as it was for those first disciples – over the dinner table, in the garden, on the lake, on the Damascus Road. Once we can see Jesus, the Holy Spirit enables us to see the other person. This is truly a gift of the Holy Spirit. Unless we can see "the other" we will never be able to be authentically engaged in mission.

If we had been able to "see the other" might the genocide in Rwanda never have happened?

If we were able "to see the other" might the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the civil war in N Ireland, the ignorance and apathy concerning Sudan and Congo, *apartheid* in South Africa, tribalism, caste and class systems, oppressive colonialism – might all this have been avoided – if only we could see?

Who are we blind to in our contexts, which prevents us from seeing the other person and, wittingly or unwittingly, means that we practise a theology of exclusion rather than of embrace?

Might it be the Dalit, the untouchable, the street sweeper whom we have never noticed before, whom we have never seen before, whom we have always passed by in the street and never looked in the eye nor exchanged a greeting.

Might it be the old women in our congregations, who always faithfully provide the food, clean the church, arrange the flowers – have we ever taken the time to "see" them and to thank them?

Might it be the young people whose music is so loud, whose language is incomprehensible, whose body-piercing and head shaving is so alien – have we ever stopped to look them in the eye, to appreciate their music, to consider the pressures they may be under – the bleak prospect of unemployment, broken homes, student loans, an uncertain future – have we ever stopped to look them in the eye and tried to understand them in their context?

Might it be those theologically different from us whom we would criticize behind their backs rather than invite them into our homes to listen to them and "see" their point of view?

Might it be those migrants who never learn our language, who never even try to integrate, who take over whole streets and suburbs in our cities – have we ever had them in our homes, offered them hospitality and tried to "see" their culture?

Might it be those of a different sexual orientation whose lifestyle might make us feel uncomfortable – have we sat with them, heard their pain and "seen" them cry?

In humility, let us ask ourselves whom Jesus may enable us "to see."