

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
April 26, 2020**

STRANGERS ON A JOURNEY



Sometimes a story that we have heard before takes on a different meaning because of what is happening in our lives. In this Sunday's Gospel we hear the story of the two disciples walking to Emmaus that first Easter Sunday afternoon.

On a human level, that story is about nothing extraordinary. It is about people walking and talking together and allowing a passing stranger to take part in their conversation. It is about two people inviting a new acquaintance to join them for something to eat.

But today, allowing a stranger to walk next to you and inviting that stranger to sit at your table is not so ordinary. In this time of the coronavirus, a stranger is a possible threat, a possible carrier of the disease. Showing hospitality has been replaced with social distancing.

Sunday's Gospel reminds us of simple human activities we would not have given a second thought to some months ago. The Emmaus story not only reminds us how our social interactions have changed, it also reminds us of what has happened in our spiritual lives.

This Sunday, we will hear the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus in a very different way. But may the day soon come when walking side by side and sharing at the table of the Lord will again be a normal part of our lives.

As we continue to live through this historic time, I encourage you to find solace in our Catholic faith we hold so dear. May the Lord keep each of us safe in his loving embrace.

With affectionate prayers,

Father John Carlos