

**Biblical and theological reflection for Compañeros de Camino**  
**Sunday 2014 – By Pastor Natanael Lizarazo**



Realities of crucifixion and resurrection are integral part of our Christian faith and mission in God's world. Jesus faced them and though in different ways, we too face them in our human relationships, particularly in our relationships with vulnerable real human beings whom Jesus himself calls the least of his family (Matthew 25). Crucifixion expresses the depth of our human sin. Resurrection expresses the transforming power and action of God to defeat the forces of death and to make all things new.

Crucifixion and resurrection are vividly present in the story of the disheartened disciples who walk from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus. These disciples had literally seen their hopes crushed in the crucifixion of their teacher and friend, Jesus of Nazareth. As they walk, their hearts are heavy with fear, grief and uncertainty and those seven miles really seem endless. Had not been for the accompanying presence of the perceived stranger, the crucified and risen Lord, the journey of these disheartened disciples would have ended in sure despair and dark uncertainty.

This story of the disheartened disciples is also our own story. One way or another, their fears are our fears, their hopes are our hopes and their journey is our journey! Because we are part of God's unfolding story, as citizens of the United States and of the kingdom of God, our biblical and theological Lutheran tradition compels and commits us to translate faith into active love, to live in Christ and in the neighbor, particularly in the neighbors who are highly vulnerable. Given the context of the broken immigration system we have in the United States, individually and collectively as the church, we are called to compassion and solidarity with those who suffer its dehumanizing consequences. Beyond the ideological and partisan politics involved, welcoming the stranger, sharing the Scriptures, breaking bread together and experiencing life-giving community are foundational to who we are and whose we are as the servant and healing body of Christ in the world!

Crucifixion and resurrection are tangible realities for real human beings who defying the harsh and threatening realities of the Arizona and Sonora Desserts, real human beings who walk tirelessly across the Mexican US border, real human beings who swim the dangerous waters of the Rio Grande. Many of them die and those who survive, so eagerly look for new life, for hope, for working opportunities and for a place of refugee and new beginnings, for everything resurrection and new life is all about!

As we travel this road of immigration reform and answer the calling of God to care for vulnerable neighbors, we know we do not walk alone. Alongside the journey, we are constantly surprised and transformed by Jesus Christ who has faced crucifixion yet has also been raised from the dead. Standing at the intersection of fear and hope, we are given the will and courage to embrace evangelical solidarity and walk alongside our Latino neighbors. Just as joy, transformation and happened for the disheartened disciples on the Emmaus Road, our own transformation also happens when Jesus joins our walk, when we passionately listen to the Scriptures, when we engage tired travelers in conversation that really matters, when we break bread together and when a fresh new reality of hospitality and of community overcomes our prejudice, our fear of the stranger, our reluctance to see the humanity of every human being. May we indeed discover that regardless of language or nationality, the crucified and risen Lord indeed walks with us! Thus we all are "Companions in the journey." Si, Compañeros de Camino!