

**“Call me Cleopas.”** (Homily)

Deacon John Fulton, St. Kevin Roman Catholic Church, Warwick, Rhode Island  
April 30, 2017 – 3rd Sunday of Easter (Lectionary: 46; Lk 24:13-35)

---

“You will show us the path of life.” (Ps 16)

Call me Cleopas!

For, like him, I’ve been to Emmaus and back, and, like him, I’m a man of many hopes: Peace in our day! Strong, lasting marriages! Life for every baby conceived! Deep love for every baby born! True compassion for the sick and needy! Homes for all! An end to hunger!

Therefore, it was only fitting that I joined a walk the other day—a walk to raise money to fight hunger—900 strong, led by a good young man with much hope. The route covered six miles, but *my* destination was a bit farther than the young man’s and his companions’. And so it was, that when I considered the length of *my* walk—just shy of seven miles—and with Easter approaching, I quite naturally thought of the road to Emmaus—a road I’d taken several times, in moments of youthful willfulness. And as I thought of Emmaus, and my own past, and that good young man and the 900 ahead, I wondered what I might tell them all, to keep them *off* that road.

Now, you may be asking, “Why keep *anyone* off the road to Emmaus?” and if you are, I most certainly sympathize with you, for of course we both know of a great miracle on that road, and of a holy Mass at its end. But I tell you, as one who has been there: Great peril lurks on that road—a road of dashed hopes and lost dreams—a road upon which many souls have been lost!

And so, as I walked that day, not so long ago, with my companions, 900 strong, and that good young man in the lead, I mused about what warning I might give them, to keep them off the road to Emmaus, and of how to get back, should they ever find themselves, like Cleopas, fleeing disappointment of their own making. For make no mistake. Cleopas fled disappointment of his *own making*, disappointment rooted in *mistaken wills* and *false hopes*. Hear his confession:

*“But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel.”*

*“WE were hoping.”*

Indeed! Please allow me (a Cleopas in practice, if not in name!) to finish his confession:

*“WE were hoping” that God would do OUR will, that he would give us what WE wanted! But he did NOT! He did NOT do OUR will! He did NOT give us what WE wanted! And so now, greatly disappointed in God, we run, downcast and confused. We run from his Word. We run from his altar of sacrifice, the holy Cross. We run from him—from God himself!*

Now listen to the Lord’s response.

*“How foolish!”* says the Lord. *“Oh, how foolish you are!”*

And please, allow me (from hours of experience on my knees in the confessional!) to flesh out the Lord’s good counsel to his wayward disciple:

*You are foolish to have put **YOUR** will before **GOD's** will. Foolish not to have believed the ancients. Foolish to have run from disappointment of your own making. And most foolish of all—to have run from God's will!*

And as I considered all these things, it came to me that this is what I should say to that good young man ahead, and the 900 with him:

*Remember Cleopas!*

*Remember his self-inflicted problem, a problem of mistaken wills!*

*Remember the Lord's solution: Know **GOD's** will!*

*Seek it in holy Scripture!*

*Hear it read to you each Sunday at holy Mass, and interpreted for you, as in this Gospel story, by a good and holy pastor!*

*Pray the Lord's prayer, morning and night, and as you say, 'Thy will be done,' remember Cleopas, and say again, '**THY** will, Lord. **THY** will. Show me **THY** will!'*

*And if you ever find yourself on the road to Emmaus, running from a disappointment of your own making, downcast and confused, I beg you, remember this: The Lord is always close!*

*Seek him in the confessional!*

*Find him at holy Mass!*

*Know him in the breaking of the bread!*

*Only, believe! Believe in his mercy, and he will bring you home!*