



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

## Danny Murphy – Third Sunday of Easter – April 15, 2018

"You are witnesses of these things." That's the last sentence of our Gospel today, when Jesus tells the disciples that they are his witnesses. Now, we are his disciples, now, so now WE are his witnesses! "You are my witnesses;" try to keep that sentence in your mind, if you can, as I share with you two witness stories with the hope that these witness stories can encourage us to be his witnesses. Our first witness story segues from the first sentence of our Gospel today when we read that the disciples recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread; he

became known to them in  
young medical student was  
several months as he was  
One night he went into a



the breaking of the bread. A  
away from his fiancée for  
studying and taking tests.  
diner for a cup of coffee and

as he was sitting at the counter sipping his coffee, an elderly woman approached him and said: "Young man, you look so sad, is everything all right?" And tears of loneliness started to come out of him and he poured out his heart to this elderly woman, telling her how homesick he was and how much he missed his fiancée. She gently patted his hand and then she took her doughnut, broke it in half and gave half of it to the young medical student. And, with that, some of his sadness was lifted from his life because Jesus became known to him in the breaking of the doughnut! "You are my witnesses!" That woman witnessed to Jesus by being kind. Each of us, don't say we can't do this, each of us can witness to Jesus by being kind, can't we? Each of us have multiple opportunities to be kind, don't we? It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice. And don't forget this old adage: "It's never too soon to be kind, because you never know how soon it can be too late!" "You are my witnesses!" Our second witness story involves a parish youth minister. Very late one night, he was in a restaurant having a snack when in walks three men all very loud, all very drunk. One man says to the other two: "Guess what? Tomorrow's my birthday!" The other two retorted: "So what! Big deal, who cares!!" the manager of the restaurant went over to the youth minister apologizing for the men's behavior and he explained to him: "You know, these three guys work the late shift in the factory. After work, every night they go to the bar to get tanked up, then they come here for coffee trying to sober up. It's like clockwork, every night, two a.m., in they come!" This gave the youth minister an idea and he said to the manager of the restaurant, "One of those men noted that tomorrow was his birthday.

Would it be alright with you if the teen group from the parish where I am – if they were to come over tomorrow night and decorate for this guy's birthday – bring some birthday balloons, birthday banners, birthday cake? Would that be alright?" The manager looks at the youth minister very quizzically and he says: "Well, if you're willing to pay for it, be my guest!!" The next night, the teens go to put up the birthday banners, the birthday balloons and sure enough at two a.m. in walk the three guys all very loud, all very drunk. The teens started singing "Happy Birthday" and then they brought the cake over to the guy whose birthday it was and they told him to blow out the candles that they had put on the cake. The guy felt his eyes filling up with tears and he explained: "No one has celebrated my birthday since I was a little boy – what Church do you belong to??" The youth minister proudly proclaimed: "We belong to the Church that throws birthday parties for drunks at two a.m." And you know what? So do we!! We belong to the church that judges no one and embraces everyone because we are the church that Jesus founded and we are his witnesses. There is no proof of his resurrection except us!