



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.

Fr. Danny Murphy – Third Sunday of Easter – April 30, 2017

We'll start with a silly story and the only reason I'm telling you this story is because one of our parishioners told it to me this week; so now I'm telling it to you! Our parishioner told me the he and two other retirees were out fishing and suddenly an angel appeared to them and announced: "Gentlemen, I know that you are faithful members of Holy Cross parish, so, as a sign of gratitude, I will grant to each of you one wish." The first retiree told the angel: "I notice that my eyesight isn't so good anymore!" The angel touched his eyes and immediately, his vision became perfect. The second retiree said to the angel: "You know, I notice that my hearing isn't so good anymore." The angel touched his ears and immediately, his hearing was perfect. The third retiree said to the angel: "Please don't touch me! I'm retired on disability and I don't want to go back to work!" We better get right into

the scriptures although I appreciate the person who told me that story! Today we're going to reflect upon our Gospel, the story of the two disciples meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus. This story teaches us how to pray. Prayer is a conversation with God. That's what the two disciples did on the road to Emmaus. They had a conversation with Jesus. They poured out to him all that was going on in their minds and hearts and they listened when Jesus spoke to them. That's prayer – having a conversation with Jesus. We don't have to complicate it. Prayer is as simple as that – a conversation with Jesus. But we're not going to reflect upon the Gospel as it can teach us how to pray; but rather let's reflect upon it how it can teach us how to hope. The two disciples said to Jesus: "We were hoping..." Those can be very sad words, can't they? There's so many disappointments, set-backs in life, aren't they? It's so tempting, at times, to give up hope, isn't it? The disciples were hoping, but then their hopes were dashed when Jesus died on the cross. Sometimes our hopes are dashed also. I'll give you one example out of a hundred that I could give you: recently, a friend of mine retired after working very hard his whole life. He and his wife planned to travel, to visit their children and grandchildren – to finally relax. Within a week of his retirement, his wife was diagnosed with cancer – she died a few months later. We were hoping – and I bet you each of you could tell a similar story – maybe a story that is worse; perhaps a personal story about how your hopes were dashed, just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus. St. Luke tells us that they were downcast until they realized that Jesus had risen. Then their hearts were burning within them. Easter, that he rose, changed everything for them. Easter, that

he rose, changes everything for us too. Easter tells us, that no matter what life brings, we have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ – because of Easter! The betrayal of Judas, the denials of Peter, the desertion of the disciples, the cowardice of Pilate, the complicity of Herod, the beating, the mocking, the cruelty, the violence – Easter says no to all of that! Here's what Easter says yes to: Easter says that Jesus rose, the Jesus who told us to turn the other cheek, to go the extra mile, to give our shirt as well as our cloak to anyone in need. Easter says yes to that! Easter says that Jesus rose. The Jesus who told us to be a good Samaritan, to be like the father in the story of the Prodigal Son, the Jesus who told us to forgive not seven times, but every time, the Jesus who told us to love our enemies, to pray for our persecutors, the Jesus who blesses the peacemakers. Easter says yes to that! Easter celebrates victory of goodness over evil, light over darkness, life over death, and trust over fear. Easter celebrates our victory over anything that life can bring us. Easter says yes to all that! Easter doesn't take away betrayals, denials, complicity, cowardice, disappointment, sorrow, tears, and tragedies. Easter doesn't take any of those things away. It doesn't look like Easter wins, it didn't look like Easter wins on Calvary either, did it? But Easter says that in the midst of all the things that happened then and still happen now – that we are not to lose hope. We can't lose hope because they don't win – they didn't then and they don't now. Easter wins, God wins, we win over anything that life can bring us – because of Easter. We were hoping – we can always hope.

