Did you know that

1. Heroin was once used to treat children’s coughs.

2. The Guinness Book of World Records was created to settle bar arguments.

3. The city of Chicago was raised by over a foot during the 1850s and ’60s without disrupting daily life.

4. The first recorded use of the abbreviation “OMG” was in a 1917 letter to Winston Churchill.

5. The number of bacteria living in or on our body is almost equal to the number of cells we have in our entire body.

Have you ever had one of those conversation when someone tells you something so unbelievable that you have to look it up?

A conversation that ends with - If you don’t believe me, go ahead have a look, look it up for yourself, out comes the phone and Bing, Google and Wiki get another hit.

When faced with the unimaginable our first reaction is doubt, and then we want proof and then we believe, grow and become more informed and able to impart our newfound knowledge to others.

 The Bible is full of accounts of people going through this very process, but without the blessing of Google, Bing or Wiki.

On Easter Sunday we met with the women disciples, making there was to the tomb full of doubt and despair, going to bury the dead not to greet the risen. Eventually after a time of fear, awe and wonder the later ending of Mark tells of Mary Mag believing and telling the other disciples that she had seen the risen Lord.

Last week we spent time with Thomas and the disciples in the upper room following the resurrection of Jesus. when we met with them, they were crowded in an upper room living in fear of the authorities, scurrying around in the half light of evening, not men full of power and faith, proclaiming the resurrection, even a week after that initial meeting with the risen Christ they are still in the upper room when Jesus returns to prove to Thomas that he has made good on his promise to rise again. And then once blessed by the Holy Spirit, once facts had been confirmed the disciples finally burst into life and got on with the job of proclamation.

Today we meet with two more of the disciples, today we meet Cleopas and his unknown travelling companion.

Maybe these two were in a worst place than the disciples of last week, as they had really abandoned hope, at least the others were still sticking around Jerusalem, there two had up sticks, eaten the sandwiches and left the pavilion.

Dejected, upset and disappointed, faces to the dust off they trudged, back to whatever was left of their old lives, back to the 9-5 and the sheer predictability of life, no more witnessing miracles, hearing the wonderous stories.

The walk form Jerusalem to Emmaus is not geographically along one, about 7 miles are so, but I can imagine that for these two it was emotionally momentous, the end of the dream, when Jesus started to walk alongside them. I don’t want to get too hung up on the face that we are told that they did not recognise him,

Maybe their brokenness stopped then realising that Jesus was walking with them, maybe their doubt, or maybe just that it would be too incredulous to belief or maybe this was the mystical working of God, we will never know this side of glory, so let just go with it.

But I do wonder how many times he was walked alongside us offering us all we need to go on and we have not recognised him?

May be the disciples needed some kind of sign, proof, reassurance, to help them see Jesus, the women disciples, had the Angel (s), Thomas had that intimate moment of feeling the wounds of Christ, so Jesus set about giving these two some proof, firstly proof for the head, but then proof for the heart, but it was only when the heart was engaged that they saw him as he was!

Initially Jesus opened up the scripture to them explaining how his life, death and resurrection was mapped out in the scriptures they would have known well, now this theology lesson, must have struck some chords with Cleopas and the other disciple, they became hungry to hear more and despite being exhausted from all that they had experienced since Good Friday, when that reached their lodgings they asked Jesus to stay with them, to let them more, maybe what came next was more than they would have ever expected.

The lesson was over now was time to engage with the heart, Jesus broke and blessed the bread Jesus echoed the last meal he had with them and in that moment, their eyes and hearts were opened. What they had understood in their heads had finally come to rest in their hearts. At this point their faith is renewed, they have been refreshed. At this point too Jesus moved on, ever the enigma, I guess he is fully understood in the heart, but the mind is always a few steps behind him. As Augustine of Hippo famously said “If you understood him, it would not be God.”

I was once told you will never argue a person into heaven, only God’s love will lead them there.

And in the breaking of the bread the love of God burst through the brokenness for Cleopas and the other disciple and in a moment were on their feet and racing back to the city to share their good news with the others.

In all 3 of our Easter readings so far, we have met with firstly doubt and brokenness, followed by revelation and then action.

I feel that there is something here for all of us, for those who feel broken and lost, the message is don’t give up, Jesus is in there with you somewhere, for those who need proof keep looking, but look with the heart not the head, for those who are feeling invigorated and refreshed that’s brilliant, now is the time to consider what God might be preparing you for and for those of us who are busy in ministry, we need to continue to be faithful to that call, to be that voice that tries to alert people to the presence of Christ