

“..day & night, let your eyes watch over this house, over this place of which you have said..”my name shall be there”..the divine name & place of abode, indelibly linked..the person the footprint & heartbeat resonate in unison & in unity..
..it could all have been written for you & of you Sisters..true familiar & alive
“& is it true?..is it true?” asks John Betjeman in his poem Christmas “the maker of the stars & sea, become a child on earth for me?”

“..is there such a God as you, true to your covenant?”.. ; Lord have mercy
“listen to the prayer that your servant will offer in this place..” ; Christ have mercy
“..yet will God really live with men on earth?”.. ; Lord have mercy
May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins & bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

..they had travelled 90miles north from Jewish HQ to the Sea of Galilee to see Jesus & to listen to him, to learn from him..they ask one simple question “why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?” 18 words which elicit a 350 word response/dressing down from a short tempered angry Jesus who had just fed 5000 & walked across lake to calm their storm, & his inner group of chosen trusties were “utterly & completely dumbfounded; their minds were closed”..& perhaps these Jewish officials had arrived inquisitive open minded & receptive?..Caravaggio would have read this gospel prayed & pondered over it, & then his lectio divina “the Supper at Emmaus” “he went as if to go on, but they pressed him to stay” remember?..scene of three of them at meal table..Jesus centre stage, to his left Cleophas, weather beaten senior & his young companion, at most awkward position at any meal table at a corner..& standing above Jesus, to his right a fourth figure..is he a servant or even innkeeper?..too well fed for servant..too well dressed for innkeeper..he looks quizzically as if to think “what on earth is going on?” left hand he holds on to his belt his tradition, his prayer cap & his right arm his sleeve is rolled up above his elbow..a Jewish rabbi..Caravaggio an expert in the use of light has rabbi’s shadow cast onto the wall behind Jesus as if to show the Risen Christ emerging from shadows of his Jewish roots..as Jesus’ right outstretched arm blesses food, it “includes” food & the two disciples, whilst excluding rabbi from food & blessing..& Cleophas meanwhile, his arms outstretched wide has direct line of sight into palm of Jesus’s hand of blessing as he alone sees mark of nail & recognises who Jesus really is..

& what happens next is that “Jesus disappears from their sight”..leaving an empty chair at the eucharist, with two disciples & food for three..what happens next do you think?..then & now..”my name shall be there..hear the entreaty of your servant & of Israel your people as they pray in this place..will God really live with men on the earth?”..& only hours beforehand he had told them “give them something to eat yourselves” I wonder if they remembered & that “all ate as much as they wanted”..I wonder..”Lord God of Israel not in heaven above nor on earth beneath is there such a God as you, true to your covenant & your kindness towards your servants when they walk wholeheartedly in your way”..a new & everlasting covenant..take this all of you [all of you ..all three of you I wonder?] & eat it..this is my Body”..

[Wk 5 Yr 2 Tuesday Mk 7;1-13]