



“To believe in the risen Jesus is to trust that the transformational power of God is active in the human world, available and relevant to every situation.”

Rowan Williams

Prayer
Risen Jesus,
slip alongside
the broken-hearted
and mend them
with the bright thread
of your love. Amen

Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him Luke 24. 31a

The Emmaus narrative (Lk 24. 13-35) has brokenness at its very heart. At the story's beginning, Luke shows us two broken human beings. It's the afternoon of the first Easter Day and they are walking home from Jerusalem. They are broken by the trauma of Jesus' execution, by grief and by bitter disappointment. As they walk, a stranger falls in with them, tuning into their brokenness. Then comes the breaking open of the scriptures, Jesus teaching them that a broken Messiah was the only way. And they invite him to share supper with them at their home...

Jesus breaks bread and blesses it and shares it with them and it is at the very moment when he tears it in two that the penny drops and they realise who he is. In Emmaus, as at the Last Supper, the meaning of the broken loaf and Jesus' broken body are mysteriously intertwined. "Do this to remember me", he'd said a few nights before. "Watch while bread is broken, share the fragments, find me in this."

Today's image is an example of kintsugi, a Japanese art form which works with broken pottery. A lacquer mixed with powdered gold fuses the fragments together, drawing luminous attention to both the break and the repair, a bright thread of something new holding the broken parts together, restoring and recreating.

What do we see as we gaze at this ceramic in the context of coronavirus at Easter?

Perhaps we see the widespread fragmentation ushered in by the virus, dangerous fissures in our economy, infrastructures and society. Perhaps we see a health system stretched to breaking point, fractured family and friendship groups, the broken spirits of the bereaved.

But we also see that for the risen Christ, nothing is beyond repair. Like a golden stream of liquid lacquer, he will quietly, mostly unacknowledged, be holding together the broken fragments of our world, at work in the long, painful, holy, process of restoration and recreation.