

GOSPEL

Luke 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The

Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV

19 April 2026 (Excerpt)

On this third Sunday of Easter, the Lord has spoken to us through the Gospel about the disciples on the road to Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-35). Let us allow ourselves to be illuminated by this word of life.

Two of the Lord's disciples, with broken and sad hearts, set out from Jerusalem to return to the village of Emmaus. They had seen the death of Jesus, whom they had faithfully followed. They were returning home disappointed and disheartened. On the road, they were "talking with each other about all these things that had happened" (Lk 24:14). They were compelled to speak of it, to recount once more what they had seen and to share what they had experienced. In doing so, however, they risked becoming prisoners of their grief and closed off to hope.

Indeed, they were walking, yet they remained fixated on the events of three days earlier when they saw the death of Jesus. They conversed with each other, but without hope of a solution. They continued to speak of what had happened, with the weariness of those who do not know how to start afresh or whether it is even possible to do so.

Dear friends, the Good News of the Lord, even for us today, is precisely this: he is alive, he has risen, and he walks beside us as we journey along the path of suffering and bitterness, opening our eyes so that we may recognize his work and granting us the grace to start afresh and rebuild the future.

The Lord walks alongside the two disappointed disciples, who are running out of hope. As their travelling companion, he helps them to piece together the fragments of that story, to look beyond their pain, to discover that they are not alone on the journey and that a future, still inhabited by the God of love, awaits them. When he stops to dine with them, sits at the table and breaks the bread, then "their eyes were opened and they recognized him" (Lk 24:31).

Here, too, is the path laid out for us ... to begin anew. On the one hand, there is the certainty that the Lord accompanies us and has compassion on us, and on the other, the commitment that he asks from us.

We experience the Lord's companionship above all in our relationship with him, in prayer, in listening to his word that sets our hearts ablaze like it did to the hearts of the two disciples. This takes place especially in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is here that we encounter God. Remain faithful to what the Church teaches, trust your pastors, and keep your gaze fixed on Jesus, who reveals himself in the word and in the Eucharist. In both we experience that the risen Lord walks beside us and, united to him, we too overcome the "deaths" that besiege us and live as those who have "risen."

This certainty that we are not alone on the journey includes a generous commitment on our part to sooth wounds and rekindle hope. Indeed, if the two disciples on the road to Emmaus recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread, this means that we too must recognize him in this way: not only in the Eucharist, but wherever there is a life that becomes like broken bread, wherever someone offers himself or herself as a gift of compassion like him.

Through the grace of the risen Christ, we can become like this broken bread that transforms reality. Just as the Eucharist reminds us that we are one body and one spirit, united to the one Lord, so it is possible to build together a country where old divisions are overcome once and for all, where hatred and violence disappear, and where the scourge of corruption is healed by a new culture of justice and sharing. Only in this way will a promising future be possible, especially for the many young people who have lost hope.

Brothers and sisters, today we need to look to the future with hope and to build the hope of the future. Do not be afraid to do so! The risen Jesus, who walks the path with you and breaks himself as bread for you, encourages you to be witnesses of his Resurrection and protagonists of a new humanity and a new society.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/Homily?



Head: The disciples walk with Jesus without recognising him until the breaking of the bread; what does this reveal about how the risen Lord is present and made known to us?



Heart: Pope Leo XIV describes how they risk becoming "prisoners of their grief"; where do you notice yourself becoming closed in on disappointment or loss of hope?



Hands: The disciples recognise Jesus and immediately return to share the news; how can you help rekindle hope in others this week through your words or actions?

PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the 'Glory Be'.