

## GOSPEL

*Luke 24:35-48*

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread.

They were still talking about all this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they could not believe it, and they stood dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes.

Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

## REFLECTION BY POPE BENDICT XVI

*30 April 2006, Translated from Italian, Excerpt*

In the Easter Season the liturgy offers us manifold incentives to strengthen our faith in the Risen Christ. Today, on the Third Sunday of Easter, for example, St Luke tells how the two disciples of Emmaus, after recognizing him "in the breaking of the bread" (Lk 24: 35), returned to Jerusalem full of joy to tell the others what had happened to them.

And just as they were speaking, the Lord appeared, showing them his hands and his feet with the signs of the Passion. Then, in the face of the Apostles' disbelief and wonder, Jesus had them give him some broiled fish and ate it before their eyes (cf. Lk 24: 35-43).

In this and in other accounts, one can discern a repeated invitation to overcome incredulity and believe in Christ's Resurrection, since his disciples are called to be witnesses precisely of this extraordinary event.

The Resurrection of Christ is central to Christianity. It is a fundamental truth to be reasserted vigorously in every epoch, since to deny it, as has been, and continues to be attempted, or to transform it into a purely spiritual event, is to thwart our very faith. St Paul states: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (I Cor 15: 14).

In the days that followed the Lord's Resurrection, the Apostles stayed together, comforted by Mary's presence, and after the Ascension they persevered with her in prayerful expectation of Pentecost. Our Lady was a mother and teacher to them, a role that she continues to play for Christians of all times.

Every year, at Eastertide, we relive this experience more intensely and perhaps, precisely for this reason, popular tradition has dedicated to Mary the month of May that normally falls between Easter and Pentecost. Consequently, this month which we begin tomorrow helps us to rediscover the maternal role that she plays in our lives so that we may always be docile disciples and courageous witnesses of the Risen Lord.

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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



**Head:** Do you believe in the literal resurrection of Jesus? Why or why not?



**Heart:** What do you think are some stumbling blocks to experiencing the joy of knowing Jesus?



**Hands:** The disciples met Jesus on the road. What are some ways that we can make space to meet with the resurrected Jesus?

## 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.’