

## Third Sunday of Easter (A) Journey to Emmaus

Acts 2:14, 22-33; Psalm 16:1-2,5,7-8,9-10,11; 1 Peter 1:17-21; Luke 24:13-35

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I greet you with the confidence of the Responsorial Psalm for this Third Sunday of Easter, "Lord, you will show us the path of life" (Ps. 16:11a). We trust that the risen Lord will always lead us on the path of life, provided we are willing to listen and follow him.

The story of the two disciples walking to Emmaus guides us to recognize the Lord in the breaking of bread. At the same time, it prompts us to reflect on what keeps us from seeing the risen Lord who walks with us. The Gospel says, "their eyes were prevented from seeing the Lord" (Lk. 24:16). This raises a question: what, or who, prevented the disciples from seeing Him? It is worth pondering: what keeps us from recognizing the Lord on our journey?

The walk to Emmaus reflects the human heart. The two disciples walked not just with their feet, but with hearts burdened by weariness. They had witnessed Jesus. They had trusted Him. They had hoped. Now, their hearts were weighed down by disappointment. A troubled heart often fails to grasp God's peace. They said, "We were hoping he would redeem Israel..." (Lk. 24:20). These words convey shattered dreams, abandoned plans, and unanswered prayers.

If we are honest, this is our story too. Like the disciples, many quietly hold similar hopes: "We were hoping life would improve; we were hoping family troubles would resolve; we were hoping sacrifices would matter." Often, those with crushed spirits say, "It is tiring. Nakakapagod na." The feeling lingers; nothing changes. Ganoon pa rin, walang pagbabago." Just like the two disciples, we walk with heavy hearts.

Yet the Gospel reveals that Jesus walks with disappointed disciples. He meets them in their struggles, listens, and allows them to share their story. The two disciples told the Lord what kept them from seeing Him. Likewise, when we are lost or discouraged, Jesus walks with us. We may not recognize Him, but He is present—in people who listen to us or help us, and in moments of unexpected strength.

Sometimes we think God only wants us to be strong. Yet the Gospel shows that God cares about our painful stories and listens to our doubts. As Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." We can bring Him our disappointments, questions, and doubts in prayer.

After hearing the disciples' sad stories, Jesus explains the Scriptures, showing that suffering is not the end—even the Cross has purpose. This reveals that listening to Jesus in prayer, as the disciples did, can transform us. "Were not our hearts burning within us?" they exclaim.

Hope rarely bursts forth instantly. It often begins subtly, like a flickering flame—a word, a prayer, or a moment at Mass. Gradually, we sense: "Maybe God is still at work."

The transforming grace arrives as Jesus breaks the bread; their eyes open, and everything shifts—from sorrow to joy, from confusion to clarity, from departure to return.

The Emmaus story becomes our story. Even in moments of heavy hearts and crushed spirits, hope stands ready to shine again.

Our struggles are not the end of the story. When we bring them to Jesus, especially in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, He listens to us, speaks to us, and enters us. Healing occurs, strength is given, and our hearts change. When our hearts change, we find perseverance.

If you feel tired, discouraged, or losing hope, like those disciples, remember hope shines brightest when we walk with the Lord. Walk with Him and stay with Him. Jesus walked with the disciples to Emmaus and walks with you today, bringing light to every journey.

Trust that with Jesus, every journey holds promise, and every heart can find strength and renewal. New beginnings are always possible, and hope is always within reach.

The Lord, you will show us the path of life!

Fr. Manny Hewe  
Pastor