



Two friends were walking and talking when Jesus came and walked with them, but they didn't know it was Him at first. Later, they realised Jesus had been with them all along.

Can you think of a person—a parent, a sibling, or a friend—who walks with you and helps you feel you are not alone?

Draw or write about this 'Jesus Person' and how they help you feel less alone and happy.



Father, I thank You for the gift of this story which has helped me see the close presence of Your Son in my life.

**Action:** this week I will try to show love by...

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LECTIO DIVINA

# Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - 3rd Sunday of Easter

A resource for personal, family and community prayer.



**“Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us.”**

## Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

*You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.*

That very same day, the first day after the Sabbath, two of them 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 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. But that 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 that 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 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 appeared to Simon.”

Then they told their story of what happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

## Background to Gospel passage

**Where does it happen?** Three locations - on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus (a distance of seven miles), the home of the two Emmaus disciples, and back in the Upper Room in Jerusalem.

**When does it happen?** This takes place on Easter Sunday evening – after the angels had announced the good news of the Resurrection to the women and Peter’s amazement at the empty tomb.

**Who is there?** Cleopas and a second disciple (possibly his wife) with the Risen Jesus who is not recognised until the breaking of bread. The eleven disciples together with their companions.

**What happens?** As disciples of Jesus the two companions on the road have had their hopes and expectations dashed by the tragic events

of Good Friday. They are devastated by their loss and now bewildered by the rumours of resurrection that are going around. As they make the sad and lonely return journey to their home in Emmaus, Jesus comes and walks beside them, though they do not recognise him and consider their companion to be a stranger. Listening deeply to their story, Jesus opens up passages of scripture that throw some light on the recent events and helps them to make some sense of the Good Friday experience. While sitting at table with them, their guest takes bread and breaks it and their eyes are opened - they recognize Jesus but he has vanished from their sight. One interpretation of this sudden disappearance could be that the risen Jesus, the Eucharistic Jesus, has now made his home within them. The disciples and their companions sharing stories of the Risen Jesus defines the essence of the Christian community.

## Suggested Guidelines to help you recognise this passage in your life experience.

**“Our own hope had been that he was the one who would set Israel free”**

Remember the experience of ‘Jerusalem’, the place where your own hope was dashed and how you walked that lonely “Emmaus road” lamenting your loss and disappointment.

**“What matters are you discussing as you walk along?”**

Remember the person who really listened to you ‘on that road’ in your time of trouble; how that person ‘walked beside you’ and gave you their full attention; how they took in everything you said with care and compassion.

**“...he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself”**

Remember how, with great sensitivity and conviction, “the Jesus person” shared something of the wisdom of their own faith and life experience with you, and you began to see things a little differently.

**“..while he was at table with them”**

Remember an experience of table fellowship, of eating and drinking together with others that strengthened the bonds of friendship and love between you, and during which you experienced something of the presence of God.

**“They told their story of what happened on the road”**

Remember experiences of community which gave us the opportunity to tell our stories and listen to the stories of others – a space which was mutually affirming and encouraging.

**What does this Gospel remind me of?** *Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?*

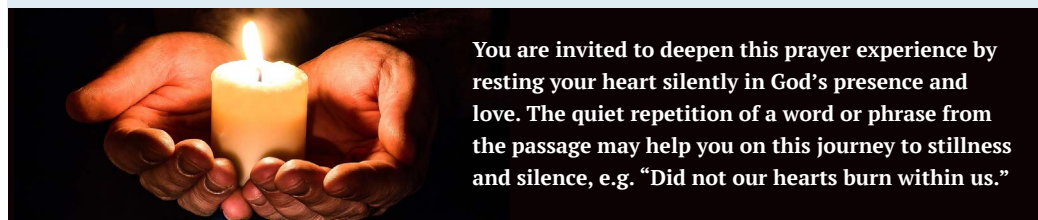
**Now I can see that God’s loving presence and action were in that life experience.**

## Prayer Response - you are invited to respond in prayer in your own words.

*Heavenly Father, I thank you for the times when I have experienced this Gospel in my life...*

*Heavenly Father, I am sorry for the times I have fallen short of living this Gospel...*

*Heavenly Father, please help me to live this Gospel...*



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God’s presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to stillness and silence, e.g. “Did not our hearts burn within us.”

## An Invitation to Reflect

What new insight has the Gospel opened my eyes to see?

## Action

This week I will try to live the Gospel by...

## Thought for the week

Real presence, deep listening and authentic sharing are at the heart of what it is to be a life-giving community.

*Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.*