

Living the Word

Acts 3.13-15, 17-19

This passage forms the final section of Peter's speech to the people of Jerusalem after Pentecost. At the end of the speech he calls the crowds to repent and change the course of their lives. Repentance and forgiveness are central to the Christian life and we must keep ourselves in check. Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father and to one another. We must be his agents of reconciliation in a broken and divided world. Are there people in our lives who we struggle to forgive? Do we nurture anger and wrath in our heart, or do we work to open our hearts to forgiveness? This is no easy task, made exponentially more difficult by the depth of the hurt, but it is one Jesus invites us to join Him in. And that forgiveness doesn't come from our own sheer willpower. That mercy can flow in us through an outpouring of grace from the Holy Spirit, but it requires us to open our hearts to accept it. Forgiveness is a gift to both ourselves and the other person, an easing of burden and an unleashing of chains. It doesn't mean we don't speak truth to those people, but it does mean that the truth is stripped of anger and soaked in forgiveness.

Prayers to Remember

Walk beside us, risen Jesus
On the Emmaus road of life
On the journey of confusion
On the road of questions
On the way of disappointment
When we do not understand.

Walk beside us, risen Jesus
On the Emmaus road of life
In the guise of the stranger
In the unfamiliar traveller
In the unexpected guest
When we feel almost overwhelmed.

Walk beside us, risen Jesus
On the Emmaus road of life
Give us insights beyond our knowing
Give us a glimpse of your will at work
Give us strength to keep on keeping on
When our hope is almost gone.
Amen.

Christian Aid.

18th April
2021

The Third Sunday
of Easter

Risen Presence



The encounter of Jesus with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus shows the transforming power of the presence of the Risen Lord through the gifts of Scripture and the Eucharist. St Luke informs us that this impromptu Bible study involved Jesus explaining to them all the Scriptures concerning himself, beginning with Moses and the prophets. After the event, the disciples realised that their hearts 'burned within them' as he explained the Scriptures to them. Our hearts can also have the same experience on the varied roads of our lives through the breaking open of the Word of God and the breaking of the bread of the Eucharist. Each time we gather for worship, and especially when we celebrate the Mass together, we should first pray that the Risen Lord will open our hearts and minds to his living presence among us in the living Word, in His Sacramental Presence and in the gathering of the faithful.

From the Fathers

"This beautiful evangelical text already contains the structure of the Mass: in the first part listening to the Word through the Scriptures; second in the Eucharistic liturgy and communion with Christ present in the sacrament of his Body and his Blood. Nourishing ourselves in this twofold meal, the Church builds itself up and is renewed every day in faith, hope and charity."

Pope Benedict XVI on the Emmaus Road Gospel.