



Worship resources Easter 3



The Emmaus Road is a compelling story. It is a curious way for Jesus to reveal himself to these two disciples, but it is also a moment that called them to a response. It is all too easy for faith to become an academic exercise or a "thing we do" on Sundays which has little connection with life. But if the resurrection is to be known and lived, we cannot just have ideas about it. We must respond to it – not just once, as to a once-off event, but in every moment, as to something that is a constant reality in the universe. It is this challenge that makes this week of

the Easter Season both meaningful and pregnant with possibility.

May our worship this week lead us to encounter life such that we cannot avoid offering ourselves to life in response!

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

The First Reading - Acts 2: 14a, 36-41

This reading is the culmination of a sermon we began last Sunday. Peter has been speaking to the Jews at Pentecost, proclaiming the crucified Jesus as their Lord and Messiah. Those who now respond are baptised and join the believing community.

The Psalm - Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17

A psalm of praise, thanksgiving and commitment in response to God's gracious rescue.

The Second Reading - 1 Peter 1: 17-23

This letter to Gentile Christians suffering the severest persecution says that our salvation was not won without cost. It is by the suffering and death of Jesus that we are born again to new life in God.

The Gospel Reading - Luke 24: 13-35

Luke's Easter evening takes us on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, where the risen Jesus joins two of his friends as they walk and talk. Only when, at supper, he takes bread, give thanks, breaks it and shares it, do they come to recognise him.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Acts%202:%2014a,%2036-41%0A%20BOR%0AIsaiah%2043:%201-12%0Acw%20Psalm%20116:%201-3,%2010-17%0A1%20Peter%201:%2017-23%0ALuke%2024:%2013-35

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Almighty God,
who hast given thine only Son
to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin,
and also an ensample of godly life;
Give us grace that we may always
most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit,
and also daily endeavour ourselves
to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples
with the sight of the risen Lord:
Give us such knowledge of his presence with us,

that we may be strengthened
and sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

Our risen Lord Jesus revealed himself in the breaking of the bread. Let us pray that we may be fed with the bread of life.

Dear Heavenly Father, we pray for all those who are hungry or starving throughout the world. Bless all those who work to provide food for people everywhere, and lead all those who are given the responsibility to distribute food to do so honestly and fairly. We thank you for blessing us with your bountiful goodness, and help us all to share willingly of all which you have first given to us.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who hunger and thirst for righteousness and peace. Lead them all to your church where true righteousness and peace may be found. We pray that you will guide as your church to share the peace that you have given to us, and to help guide people who are lost and aching to you through Jesus Christ. We also pray for those who hunger for understanding. Reveal your word to them so that their eyes may be opened in faith.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are struggling with physical disabilities. Guide any treatment available and give them healing if it is your will. We pray that you will give comfort to all who have disabilities because of an accident or disease and strengthen them to continue with life and learn to adapt to their new situation. Bless those who work with them and give them strength and compassion in their work. We pray also for those around the world who are forced to beg for their living because of physical disability or other circumstances. We pray that you will give them what they require to lead a normal life, and fill us with generosity to give to people in need as we are able to.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Bless and protect all people who are sick and the dying and all who hunger for health. We pray for those who struggle with bad health in our community,

especially (*insert names here*). As you healed the cripple man in Jesus' name, bring your perfect healing to all who need it, and especially bring that ultimate healing of eternal life, through Jesus victory over death and hell.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Father, in the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you have swallowed up death for ever, and opened up the way for all people to sit with you at the feast of eternal life. Feed us now and always with the bread of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

Call to prayer

Our risen Lord Jesus revealed himself in the breaking of the bread.
Here at this meal, let us pray that we may be fed with the bread of life.

The response:

Father, feed us with the bread of life,
that we may hunger no more.

Suggested intercessions

- * for the hungry and the starving throughout the world
- * for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and peace
- * for farmers who struggle to make a living producing food for others
- * for the sick and the dying, who hunger for health
- * for those who hunger for understanding, that God's word may be revealed to them
- * for the whole communion of saints, that we may see Jesus in the breaking of bread

Concluding prayer

Father, in the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you have swallowed up death for ever, and opened up the way for all people to sit with you at the feast of eternal life. Feed us now and always with the bread of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION

Living God,
your Son made himself known to his disciples
in the breaking of bread.
Open the eyes of our faith,
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

PRAYERS

Forgive us, God of Easter. Walk with us, so we can become companions to the lost. Welcome us, so we can include the hopeless and the homeless. Love us, so we can share that love with everyone we meet on our journey, as we follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, into life with you. Amen.

Elusive God,
companion on the way,
you walk behind, beside, beyond;
you catch us unawares.
Break through the disillusionment and despair
clouding our vision,
that, with wide-eyed wonder,
we may find our way and journey on
as messengers of your good news. Amen.

Emmaus Prayer

Luke 24:13-35

Risen One, like those disciples on the road to Emmaus, we struggle to recognize you in the everyday journey of our lives. We seek your wisdom in the midst of the questions we have about the circumstances we find ourselves in—circumstances sometimes beyond our control, but often of our own making.

Open our eyes, Light of the World, to your work of transformation in and around us. As we walk with you day by day, may your new life be made manifest in what we say to others. Help us to understand the power of our words to hurt or to heal; give us the graciousness to make all our conversations holy.

Just as we desire that our speaking be holy, may our seeing be holy as well. We are bombarded with images everyday O Christ, that shape our attitudes and behaviors. As you opened the scriptures to the disciples and taught them everything, open our eyes to behold you in your Word, in the beauty of nature, the beauty of another human being and the beauty of sacred art.

And in our seeing, help us to recognize and welcome the stranger in our midst. May our welcome be a celebration of the gifts and graces of persons who are different from us and not merely some token tolerance of an outsider.

You were known to the disciples in the breaking of the bread. May your resurrection presence guide us in the decisions we make about what we take into our bodies—especially what we eat and what we drink. Help us to understand our eating and drinking as sacred events, not to be abused or approached mindlessly.

So often we forget, Holy One, that you invite us to abide with you; to have our lives hidden in you. We thank you that you travel with us in our joys and our concerns. Amen.

Prayer based on the Road to Emmaus

Lord Jesus, this story tells us so much about you. You are:

not passive ethereal being, but a pursuer.
not a benign, nice associate, but one who risks speaking the truth in love.
not a coercive overpowering presence, but a patient teacher.
not an isolated, individualistic prophet, but a guest, even a host,
whose true character is seen in table fellowship.

We praise you as our patient teacher, our ever-pursuing Lord. Amen.

by Nathan Bierma

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,

redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his resurrection,
teaching them to love all people as neighbours.
As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it.
Open our hearts to your power moving
around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.
Guide us in the path of discipleship,

so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near
by our words and deeds. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

God's life and grace, and the gift of resurrection, are wonderful things to know about, but they mean very little in real terms without a response from us. While God's grace and love are always available, it is as we respond that we are able to appropriate and benefit from them. The power of Peter's sermon was only realised by his hearers when they responded to what he had said. The psalmist recognises that God's gracious rescue is made real when he responds with gratitude, praise and commitment. Peter invites the believers who have come to faith in Christ and received God's life to respond by living lives of love toward one another, which of course, is how God's life is experienced. Finally, the two disciples on the Emmaus Road have heard about Jesus' resurrection, but it is only when they recognise him at the meal as he breaks bread that the reality of the resurrection hits home to them and they experience it for themselves. It is not that God needs our response in order to love us, forgive us, or save us, but that for us to know, experience and live out of the life and grace of God, we need to appropriate what God has given us and respond to the realities that we encounter. This call for response is a powerful and hopeful part of the Gospel we preach, and is the gift we are invited to share in worship this week.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: When we begin to talk and think about applying the Gospel to the realities of our world, ideas like resurrection and response don't often come up, and yet they are key. As we have already explored, resurrection is what God is doing in the world in all sorts of ways, and we are called to co-operate and co-create with God as this life-giving work is happening. This is where the response comes in. When tsunamis and earthquakes hit, we are called to respond to the Christ at work in the midst of grief, death and suffering. When the planet is threatened by greedy consumerism, we are called to respond to the Christ who gave life to the universe. When war and conflict harms innocent people, and when dictators bomb their own, we are called to respond to the Christ who brings peace. Wherever life is at work to rescue, heal and restore there is a response that we are called to make. We can ignore it and go about our lives as if it doesn't matter, or we can seek to be a part of the life-giving work of God. We can walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus and then let him walk on, or we can

invite him in for a meal. We can stay alone and amazed at the Christ we've encountered, or we can run back into community and share what we've experienced, drawing others into God's life. Whether by prayer, contribution, volunteering or voting, our task is to remain always open to God's life and where it may break out next, and then to be ready with a response that brings grace and life to others. In what ways can your community be part of the work of resurrection in the most broken and hurting parts of our world this week?

LOCAL APPLICATION: In every Church community we speak easily about God's life and God's resurrection and how it is available for us. It's easy, though, for this to become either academic or individualistic. What we sometimes fail to recognise is that whenever we see God's life at work in another, or in our communities, there is a response that we can make. One of the great privileges of the faith is that we get to participate with Jesus in what God is doing in the world. This is far more than just praying a personal prayer to receive God's life or preaching 'evangelistic' sermons to 'get people saved'. It's when we watch to see what God is already doing, where God's life is already breaking out, and then we respond to this by co-creating, co-caring and co-welcoming people, that we, and those God touches, really connect with and experience God's life. The big question this week, then, is to discover where in your church resurrection is beginning to break out (or is continuing to break out), and where in your community or neighbourhood is resurrection at work? Then this must be followed up with the question of what our response should be – how does God want us to participate, to notice, communicate and spread the life of God? So often we feel that we have to make things happen, and that the initiative begins with us. The resurrection helps us to recognise that the initiative is always God's. God's life is always breaking out whether we see it or not. Our task is not to make anything happen, but to respond – to get on board with – what God is already doing. This is a liberating and empowering thought, but also a challenging one. We can choose to do our own thing, or nothing, but if we really want to encounter God and be involved in Gospel work, we better recognise and respond to God's thing! How can you do this more or better in your community this week?

SERMON OUTLINE

Luke 24:13-35 on the Emmaus Road...

Picture the 2 disciples traveling the 7 miles from Jerusalem - *one of the named Cleopas*... Imagine their feelings/fears....

1. Broken Hearts: - their world had fallen apart - hopes & dreams dashed at Calvary - were discussing events in Jerusalem - were then joined by a stranger - the Saviour - but failed to recognise him... were so depressed & distressed..

2. Bewildered Hearts:- confused, despondent, uncertain..

a) Aggrieved: *we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel* - but now with Jesus crucified & the body missing, they didn't know what to think....

b) Amazed: by the story of the women - *they told us they had seen a vision of angels who said that he was risen* - but him they did not see... It was all too much for them...

3. Burning Hearts:- *he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.* They said later (v32) *were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road?* What a journey! What an exposition - to only 2!

4. Believing Hearts:- Recognition! Had invited Jesus - *urged him strongly "Stay with us for it is nearly evening* - share supper - dangers of travelling after dark.. At supper *he took bread, gave thanks, broke it & began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened & they recognised him, & he disappeared from their sight.* It was the Lord - truly risen and alive!!

They rushed back to Jerusalem & *found the 11*, & shared the good news - *The Lord is risen!* **depression** vanished - **despair** banished - **death** conquered - **doubt** disappeared...

Sadness was turned to joy - *the Lord has risen!*

Despair “ “ hope - *it is true!* Still OUR message!

-By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Going My Way - a basic useful short article - three paragraphs - on “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way?” (Lk. 24:32) by John R. Donahue, S.J., who is the Professor of New Testament Studies at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, Md.

http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=1683

Two sermons at this site. "On the Road" based on Luke 24:13-35, and "Those God emptying days" based on Luke 24:13-35. Bruce Prewer ministers in Australia. Scroll down to get to the sermons.

<http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocA/30EAST3.htm>

The Eucharistic presence from Emmaus to us and to the end of time - a rich resource which may stimulate thought.

<http://www.beswick.info/rcresources/E3A96Ser.htm>

[Breaking Open](#), the Rev. Lee Hull Moses, Day 1,
Pick up from para 4 ...Living with eyes opened means recognizing that this place we live in, here in this middle time between the empty tomb and the rise to heaven, is a place that is sometimes as filled with pain and grief as it is with life and love. So maybe the church becomes the place where those truths are broken open, too. With eyes open, we can see that there is too much injustice in the world, too much pain. With eyes open, we can see that there are too many hungry and too many left out in the cold, too many strangers still not welcome at the table.

http://day1.org/2868-young_leaders_series_ii_breaking_open

["Gaining Recognition,"](#) the Rev. Dr. Donovan Drake, *Day 1*

I submit that it's the lack of recognition that empowers this story from Luke's gospel. The risen Lord has joined Cleopas and his friend on the Road to Emmaus, but for some reason their eyes are kept from recognizing Jesus. Stopping, standing, looking sad, Cleopas says to the one who has joined them, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth...."

http://day1.org/1083-gaining_recognition

CHILDREN

[Worshiping with Children](#), Easter 3A, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown

http://day1.org/1083-gaining_recognition

[Proclaiming Faith](#), discussion, prayer, activities for primary grades, activities

http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm

["Sermon of the Week," / "Mensajes para ninos,"](#) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Colouring Pages, Puzzles.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

[Faith Formation Journeys,](#) Children's Sermon Easter 3A,
<http://faithformationjourneys.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/easter-3-childrens-sermon-2011.html>

["What the Heart Knows"](#) Children's Lesson for Third Sunday in Easter from Anna's Hosannas.

<http://annashosannas.net/Easter-3A.php>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

[O Master Let Me Walk With Thee](#)

[I Sought The Lord](#)

[Crown Him With Many Crowns](#)

[O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing](#)

[Maker In Whom We Live](#)

[My Life Is In You, Lord](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Mighty To Save](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Everlasting God](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[I Will Offer Up My Life](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Once Again](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title