

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Last week, we reflected on how the risen Christ meets us in our fear, entering the locked rooms of our lives and offering peace. This week, the Easter journey continues, showing us that recovery does not unfold in isolation. After encountering mercy, we begin to walk differently—and we do not walk alone.

Many of us can recall a time in our lives when we felt discouraged, confused, or disoriented in recovery. Perhaps we had begun to change, but things did not feel the way we expected. Old thoughts returned, emotions felt overwhelming, or progress seemed slower than we had hoped. In those moments, it can be tempting to withdraw, to question whether anything is really changing, or to quietly return to old patterns.

This Sunday's gospel reading tells the story of two disciples walking away from Jerusalem to Emmaus after the crucifixion (Luke 24:13-32). As they walk, we are told that *"Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him."* They are not celebrating the resurrection, rather they are processing disappointment. Their hopes had been placed in what they thought would happen, and now they are trying to make sense of what feels like loss.

This moment can feel familiar in recovery. We may begin the journey with certain expectations—clarity, relief, or quick transformation. When those expectations are not met, discouragement can set in. Like the disciples, we may find ourselves walking away internally, even if we continue to show up outwardly.

As they walk, Jesus asks them, *"What are you discussing as you walk along?"* and they stop, looking downcast. He invites them to speak openly about their confusion and pain. This reflects an important part of recovery. Healing often begins when we are willing to share honestly about what is really going on within us. We do not move forward by pretending everything

is fine. We move forward by bringing our thoughts, fears, and disappointments into the light.

Jesus does not immediately correct them. Instead, He walks with them and begins to reframe their understanding. We are told that *"beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures."* In recovery, this kind of guidance often comes through other people. A sponsor, a trusted friend, or someone in a meeting may help us see our situation more clearly. They do not walk the path for us, but they walk with us, offering perspective when our thinking becomes clouded.

Over time, something begins to shift within the disciples. Later they reflect, *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way?"* Often in recovery, growth happens gradually. What feels like an ordinary conversation or a simple meeting may carry more weight than we realize at the time. As we remain open, attentive, and willing, our hearts begin to change.

The turning point comes when they sit down at table. The gospel tells us that Jesus *"took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him."* For us, this points to the Eucharist, where Christ continues to reveal Himself. It also reminds us that recognition often comes after encounter—after walking, listening, and staying present.

One of the most important shifts in recovery is moving from isolation to connection. Where we once withdrew, we begin to reach out. Where we once relied only on ourselves, we begin to trust others. Where we once walked aimlessly, we begin to walk with purpose, even if we do not yet see the full path ahead.

The story does not end on the road. The disciples return to Jerusalem to share what they have experienced. In the same way, recovery leads us outward. What we receive is meant to be shared. Our experience becomes a source of hope for others who are still walking in confusion or doubt.

Easter reminds us that the risen Christ is not distant. He walks with us, often in ways we do not immediately recognize. As we continue on this path of recovery, we are invited to remain open—to conversation, to community, and to the quiet ways God is revealing Himself along the way.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you experienced someone walking alongside you in a way that helped you see your situation more clearly?

- What does it look like for you to remain open and engaged in your recovery when you feel discouraged or uncertain?

- How are you being invited to accompany or support someone else in their recovery journey right now?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Acts 2:14, 22-33

RESP. PS. Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

SECOND READING 1 Peter 1:17-21

GOSPEL Luke 24:13-35