

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, reminding us that healing does not unfold in isolation. After encountering mercy, we begin to walk differently—and we are not meant to walk alone.

Many of us can recall times when loving someone struggling with addiction or destructive patterns left us discouraged, confused, or emotionally exhausted. We may have hoped that things would improve quickly, that clarity would come, or that our efforts would finally bring change. When those expectations were not met, we were left trying to make sense of disappointment. In those moments, it can be tempting to withdraw, to become overwhelmed by worry, or to return to patterns of control or over-functioning.

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 resurrection, but trying to understand what feels like loss.

This experience can resonate deeply for those impacted by a loved one's addiction. We may have placed hope in a certain outcome, only to find ourselves facing uncertainty again. Like the disciples, we may find ourselves walking forward physically, but emotionally carrying disappointment or confusion.

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 what they are experiencing. In our own recovery, this is an important step. Healing begins when we are honest about our thoughts, fears, and frustrations. Rather

than carrying everything alone, we are invited to share with others who understand.

Jesus does not immediately fix their situation. Instead, He walks with them and gently helps them see things differently. We are told that *"beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures."* In a similar way, recovery for family and friends often unfolds through accompaniment. A sponsor, a meeting, or a trusted voice can help us recognize patterns we could not see on our own. They do not change our loved one's behavior, but they help us change how we respond.

Over time, something begins to shift. The disciples later reflect, *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way?"* Growth in recovery often happens gradually. We may not notice it in the moment, but as we continue to show up, we begin to experience greater clarity, peace, and freedom.

The turning point comes when they sit at table. 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 reminds us that clarity often follows relationship. As we remain connected to God and to others, we begin to see more clearly.

One of the most important shifts in this journey is moving from control to trust. Where we once tried to manage outcomes, we begin to entrust them to God. Where we once isolated, we begin to connect. Where we once carried everything alone, we begin to share the burden.

The disciples return to Jerusalem to share what they have experienced. In the same way, our healing can become a source of hope for others. We begin to walk alongside others not to fix them, but to support them.

Easter reminds us that Christ walks with us, even when we do not recognize Him. As we continue this journey, we are invited to remain open—to conversation, to support, and to the quiet ways God is guiding us toward peace.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed yourself carrying disappointment or trying to make sense of a difficult situation with a loved one?

- What does it look like for you to share honestly about your experience instead of carrying it alone?

- How are you being invited to shift from control toward trust in this season of your recovery?

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