

Journeying Together **The Road to Emmaus**



Welcome everyone and allow them time to “arrive” after busy days.

Opening Responses

Reader We gather in the name of the Father
**All The Source of all light and life –
and in whom we all live and move and have our being.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Son
**All Who journeys with all his disciples and friends
their inspiration and their guide.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit
**All Who breathes through the Word of God
and touches our hearts with its truth.**

Reader We gather...
**All (making the Sign of the Cross) in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen**

Gospel Reading – Luke 24: 13-35

Use these or your own words.

Please listen as the Gospel is read. It can help to close your eyes—or look at the person reading—or the image on the screen – whichever suits you best.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognising him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, '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, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Personal Time with the Gospel

This is quite a long Gospel – but it is good to hear it all as this does justice to the journey the two disciples were on. They start out despondent – trying to work out what has happened to the hopes and dreams they invested in Jesus. They had forgotten that Jesus had said that when two or more people were gathered in his name – and so do not recognise him when he comes alongside them. But the conversation and the meal they share changes their lives completely!

- How do the disciples change during the course of the Gospel?
- What difference does it make to share an experience like this rather than doing it on your own?

Group Reflection

This Gospel sums up a lot of what being a Christian is about. Very few of us are called to follow the journey of Faith alone. We have our families, friends and church communities all of whom can support us along the way. We are, of course, also called to walk alongside them – encouraging them during difficult times, sharing their joys and celebrating achievements with them.

- How has being part of a group helped you during your journey through Lent?
- What other groups and communities might help us as we continue our journeys of faith?

Depending on the size of the group, you might invite people to share any thoughts from their group discussion.

Listening Together

We will use the timers for the last time... Use the time to speak – uninterrupted – about the thoughts we will suggest – or about any aspect of our time journeying together. Listen to these thoughts inspired by today's Gospel that you may like to consider during the listening time – or which might prompt other thoughts and insights for you.

- When they were faced with the trauma of Jesus' death, two disciples travelled together – probably back to a place where they felt they would be safe.
- Along the way, they shared the hopes and the sorrows of their experience.
- As they shared their experiences, Christ came alongside them and helped them to deepen their understanding of what had happened.
- Even though they knew Jesus, they did not recognise him at the time.
- The words of Jesus – and reflecting on their experience – makes their hearts burn in a way that, at first, they do not understand.
- Jesus gives them a simple sign that helps them to recognise who has been walking alongside.
- The conversation and meal change the disciples from frightened and confused people to a couple who are ready to share their experience with their friends – in the first instance.

The following questions might help you to focus your thoughts – but do not feel you have to use them.

- How does the story of these disciples journeying together echo your own journey in faith?
- How has journeying together during Lent helped to enrich my understanding of the Word of God – and prepare me to take my faith deeper in the future?

Drawing our Sessions together

Our sessions come to an end – but before we go our separate ways, a couple of thoughts...

If you have found the Listening Together parts of our sessions interesting and helpful, you might like to learn more about it in a course that is being developed by the Diocese. This will look at listening skills and the art of accompanying others in their journeys in faith. There is a flyer for this which you can take away to think about.

Spend a few moments in personal reflection on

- What has been a highlight of the sessions for me?
- What would I like to take forward – either myself or with others?

If appropriate, try to come up with one practical action. As this is the last meeting in this series you will not have an opportunity to come together to share how things have gone. There is, though, nothing to stop you meeting up with others over coffee to continue the conversation!

Following a time of more general sharing within the group, this might be a good point to have a small celebratory snack or meal.

Thank everyone for coming and for their support for you and for each other – and end with the prayer that has accompanied the sessions over the last few weeks.

Closing Prayer

All: This day was made by the Lord, we rejoice and are glad

Reader: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
For his love has no end.
Let the sons of Israel say
“His love has no end”.

All: This day was made by the Lord, we rejoice and are glad

Reader: The Lord’s right hand has triumphed
His right hand raised me up
I shall not die I shall live
And recount his deeds

All: This day was made by the Lord, we rejoice and are glad

Reader: The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone,
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.

All: This day was made by the Lord, we rejoice and are glad

Amen