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| Third Sunday of Easter  Reading 1: [Acts 2:14, 22-33](http://usccb.org/bible/readings/042620.cfm)  [Responsorial Psalm: 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11](http://usccb.org/bible/readings/042620.cfm)  [Reading II: 1 Peter 1:17-21](http://usccb.org/bible/readings/042620.cfm)  [Gospel: Luke 24:13-35](http://usccb.org/bible/readings/042620.cfm)  Readings may be found on the US Bishop’s website:  <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/042323.cfm> | The Road to Emmaus. ivory. 1115  **Rembrandt 1648**  **Supper at Emmaus** |

For the Third Sunday of Easter, the Gospel passage varies from the normal selections from John and is taken from Luke.  All three readings this Sunday present the resurrection from a unique dimension and speak of the release from bondage.

The selection from the Acts of the Apostles offers the first part of the speech by Peter on Pentecost. It is a proclamation of the purpose of the coming of the Spirit – to announce God’s plan of salvation. Christ is the one who was sent by God and God ratified this by raising him from the dead. Jesus revealed God through what he taught and the miracles that he worked.  Jesus showed his faithfulness by trusting God even into death.

There are two ways to view death.  Biologically, death is the end of life as we know it.  Theological death is separation from God.  Jesus was faithful to God even through the cross.  Physical death did not separate him from God but rather destroyed the power of physical death, as seen in the resurrection.  Jesus' death on the cross was the victory over alienation and separation from God.  For Christians, physical death is joining Jesus in the fullness of life.

Highlighting Psalm 16, Peter states that God’s faithful one will not be abandoned to death and undergo the decay of the body. Those words were not fulfilled for David (who was assumed to be the author of the Psalm) whose tomb was near where Peter was speaking and is still present in Jerusalem today.  David died and his body decayed.  The words of the psalm find their meaning in Jesus, who, when he died, could not be held by death but was raised from the grave by the Father’s faithfulness.

Psalm 16 is also used as the responsorial psalm, "You show us the path of life."  It is often hard to choose when we have options because we do not know what the consequences of our choice will be.  Sometimes one is paralyzed and cannot make a choice.  At other times, one makes a choice and then continually wonders what would have come for making a different choice.  Our faith (trusting reliance) upon God leads us to the confidence that God is with us and will guide us.  We ask God to show us the path that will lead to the fullness of life and live in confidence that God will guide us along our journey.

The First Letter of Peter invites us who call God Father to rely upon God’s care for us as parents care for their children.  We are reminded that we are sojourners. Each of us is on a journey and our final home is not in this world. Christians have been delivered from a futile way of life through the death and resurrection of Jesus.  The reflection ponders baptism through the lens of Passover and the Babylonian exile.  Ransom and Liberation highlight the Passover experience, and the not yet reflects the exile experience.  The author is drawing our attention to the fact that although we do belong to God’s heavenly reign, we are still living on earth in anticipation of God’s final revelation.

The Gospel recounts one of the most beautiful stories in the Gospels.  It draws our attention to how we encounter Christ.  Two phrases highlight the change that takes place, Eyes were prevented from recognizing him/Eyes were opened and conversing while downcast/Hearts were burning. Two people think everything is over because Jesus has died and their particular hopes for the end of Roman rule and the restoration of the kingdom of Israel are unfulfilled. Their understanding of Jesus and his ministry was very limited, and they did not recognize the bigger plan that God had. In their grief, they leave the community and head off on their own. Jesus accompanies them as they travel along even though they did not recognize him or what his ministry entails. Jesus converses with them and offers them insights into the scriptures.  Still, they do not recognize him.  Often, we get so focused on our agenda or goal, that we do not recognize anything else.  It is when Jesus acts, he breaks the bread, that they recognize him.  In the ritual action that connects to events in Jesus' life, the disciples come to a new understanding of Jesus and themselves. So, for us, only when something happens, do we look back and recognize the presence of God in our life. In breaking and sharing bread, one is sharing life with others.  Jesus shared life with humanity by giving his life for others.  They arise and return to the community in Jerusalem.

**Themes:**

Resurrection Eucharist

Spiritual Journey Scriptural Reflection / Lectio Divina

**Reflection Questions:**

Where are you downcast or weary?  What has prevented you from recognizing Christ in your life?

Who has accompanied you on your life journey?  Who has helped you see the path of life?  Give thanks for them.

What are some signs in your life that Christ is risen?

Have you ever experienced a scripture passage burning in your heart (bringing you a sense of life and vitality) or an "Aha" moment in which things became clear to you?

How might you grow in your awareness of the message of the scriptures and their application in your life?

**Prayer suggestions:**

For the Church: that the freedom brought by the resurrection may enable us to live with purpose and help others to forsake the fruitless pursuits of power, fame, and wealth

For a spirit of reverence: that as we break the bread and share the cup, we may recognize more fully the Risen Lord in our midst

For all who are on significant journeys: that God will protect missionaries, pilgrims, aid workers, and members of the military, lead them safely to their destination, and help them be aware of God's presence with them each day

For a deepening of our love and hunger for the Word of God: that through reading and praying the scriptures, our hearts may be set on fire, and our commitment to God grow

For all who lead or participate in scripture discussion groups: that the Spirit will guide their pursuit of God’s Word and help them to live it in their lives