

Sermon for April 19, 2026 — Third Sunday of Easter
Texts: Acts 2:22–33; Psalm 16:1–2, 7–11; Luke
24:13–35

Title: Recognizing Jesus on the Road

Introduction

Imagine walking home after a devastating disappointment — perhaps a loss, a failed plan, or a spiritual struggle. You feel alone, confused, and unsure of what comes next. This was the scene for the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They had walked with Jesus, heard His teachings, and witnessed His death, yet they could not understand the Resurrection. In their sorrow, they were leaving Jerusalem, trying to make sense of a reality that seemed impossible.

Many of us have our own “Emmaus moments,” moments when life is confusing, faith is tested, and God seems distant. Today’s readings remind us that even in our confusion, Jesus walks with us — often unrecognized — and invites us to encounter Him anew.

First: The Witness of the Resurrection (Acts 2:22–33)

Peter’s sermon in Acts reminds us that the Resurrection is not merely a story or legend; it is a historical, witnessed reality. Jesus was **“handed over and killed according to the plan of God, but God raised Him up, freeing Him from death.”** Faith grows when Scripture and testimony converge, i.e., when we hear the Word proclaimed and see the evidence of God’s power in the lives of others. Just as Peter affirmed Jesus’ Resurrection to the crowd, our faith is strengthened when we recognize God’s presence and work in the world. The disciples on the road were confused, but they would

come to see that what had happened was real — and life-changing.

Second: Joy and Security in God (Psalm 16:1–2, 7–11)

The psalmist provides a profound reflection on trust, joy, and security in God. **“I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also, my heart instructs me.”** Even in moments of doubt, God guides our hearts and shows us the path of life. Verse 11 reminds us: **“You will show me the path of life; in your presence is fullness of joy.”**

This mirrors the disciples’ eventual recognition of Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Their sorrow was replaced with reassurance, clarity, and joy when they encountered the risen Christ. Psalm 16 encourages us to seek God’s guidance and trust that His presence brings fullness of life, even when we cannot yet see Him clearly.

Third: Recognizing Jesus on the Road (Luke 24:13–35)

The story of the two disciples walking to Emmaus illustrates the journey from confusion to recognition. They were leaving Jerusalem, disheartened and unsure, when Jesus joined them, even though they did not recognize Him. Christ often enters our lives in ordinary ways, through conversation, Scripture, prayer, or fellowship, before we fully perceive Him. Their hearts **“burned within them”** as He explained the Scriptures, showing the transformative power of God’s Word. Recognition finally came at the breaking of bread, highlighting the importance of Eucharist, community, and intimate encounters with God. When the disciples saw Jesus, their sorrow turned to joy, and they were transformed into witnesses who **“immediately returned to Jerusalem”** to proclaim the Good News. Like them,

we are called to notice Christ's presence in our lives, to allow His Word to illuminate our understanding, and to share the joy of encountering Him with others.

Conclusion

The readings today remind us that God walks with us even when we do not recognize Him. Whether through testimony, Scripture, or the breaking of bread, Christ meets us on our roads of confusion, doubt, and daily routine. As we continue our Easter celebration, let us open our hearts and eyes to Jesus, allowing our lives to be transformed by the joy of His presence. May we respond like the disciples — **hearts burning with faith, ready to witness and share the Good News with the world.**

Call to Prayer:

Take a moment to silently name a place or moment this week where you hope to encounter Christ. Invite Him to walk with you on your personal road, trusting that recognition will come in His perfect time.