

As together we say the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father.....

Let us pray together:

Lord of creativity, stay with us when we are lost and waiting. Give us time to let the deadness of the past slip away from us, and help us to see the way ahead to new patterns and possibilities. May the path of your resurrection continue to unfold in these times. Help us to be aware of your Spirit nudging us and annoying us into action. May we play our part in bringing the light of resurrection into the sometimes confusing pattern of plans and relationships in our world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HIS
HOLY
SPIRIT
FILLS THE
WORLD



'Via Lucis'

The Way of the Resurrection

THE WAY OF THE RESURRECTION



Opening Hymn:

“ Spirit Lives”

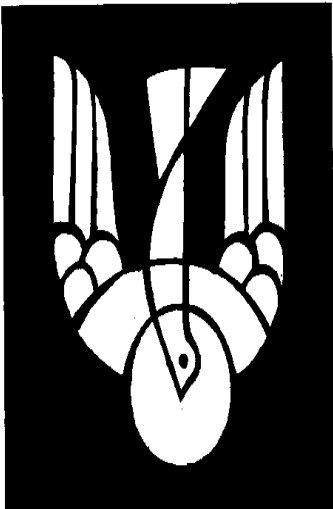
The Spirit lives to set us free,
Walk, walk in the light.
He binds us all in unity,
Walk, walk in the light

Walk in the light, (3)
Walk in the light of the Lord.



Jesus promised life to all.
Walk, walk in the light.
The dead were wakened by his call,
Walk, walk in the light

Walk in the light, (3)
Walk in the light of the Lord.



The Spirit lives in you and me.
Walk, walk in the light.
His light will shine for all to see,
Walk, walk in the light

Walk in the light, (3)
Walk in the light of the Lord.

Reader 1:

Reflection

There are many moments, scattered through our lives, when we come alive. We grow in awareness, and suddenly see something that was always there in a totally new way. Like a jigsaw puzzle suddenly falling into place we understand how things fit together and the meaning behind apparently different events that make up our story. That sudden insight is rare for an individual, but even more amazing when it happens for a whole group. The men and women in the upper room spent their time waiting, reflecting and in silence. All of a sudden they received inspiration as a group. They were overcome with the joy and energy of insight and wisdom. They would never see the events of Jesus' life in the same way again. Jesus' life had become a revelation to them.

The miracle of that experience is that it happened instantaneously to the whole group. It left them free and ready to take up the path of the resurrection that Jesus opened up for us all. All their confusion crumbled. The way ahead became clear for the whole group. The power of the experience was able to cut through differences of language and old prejudices. They were offered new hope and a new vision of a world heading towards eternal life and light, the Via Lucis.

Each of us will find moments of insight and inspiration on our own journey. Like finding a signpost when lost, it gives us hope and energy to keep moving forward. The inspiration of the Spirit also draws us together on a common journey as a church. A journey that awakens in others the presence of the Risen Lord, walking the road with us each day.

The Risen Lord sends the Spirit Promised to the Disciples

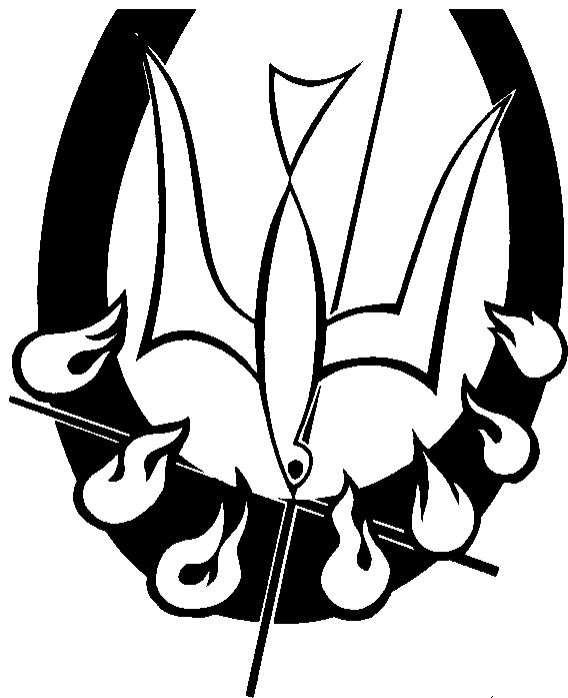
Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. *Acts 2: 1-4*



Jesus Rises from the Dead

Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

From the holy gospel according to Matthew

But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." *Mt 28:5-7*

Reader 1:

Reflection

Our lives are stitched together with a series of small beginnings and endings. There are many first times and last times that mark our progress through life. Some of them seem to stand out as instances for stopping, recognising the moment and perhaps giving thanks.

The women who took perfume to anoint Jesus' body are recognising an ending and reverencing the moment.

Slowing down activity, and coming to terms with all that has happened, is essential if we are to grow in wisdom and let life teach us. These moments are times to gather up what the past has to offer, but they are not times to cling onto for very long. The angels in the story remind the women not to look for too long at what is dead and what is done. Instead to look for life and God's presence in what is happening, in the present moment. That movement from death to life can be hard to make. It can be so easy to be trapped in our sadness and regret.

All of us need to pause, and listen for the encouragement of angel voices, to move us forward into life.

The Risen Lord Appears to Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

From the holy gospel according to Luke

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 recognizing 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.

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. *Luke 24*



The Risen Lord Ascends to the Father

Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." *Acts 1:6-11*

Reader 1:

Reflection

There are times when we know that things are going too well to last. Great times, wonderful experiences, but you try hard not to get used to them. Like the autumn harvest that suddenly slips into a bitter winter, our lives roll through many seasons, none of which last forever. People and plans move through the same seasonal pattern. We are constantly challenged to say goodbye to one situation before we embrace the new one. The disciples must have been confused and sad as they saw Jesus leave. They must have felt a kind of grief and emptiness. Their honeymoon was over and they were not sure what lay ahead.

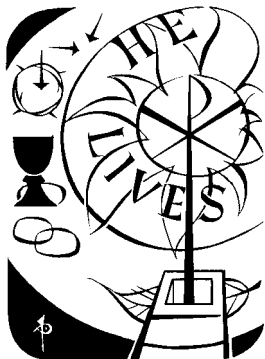
Our lives unfold in a constant procession of hellos and goodbyes. People touch our lives, and leave us with an experience or a word. They move on along a path that may or may not cross our path again. Walking the way of the resurrection does not mean avoiding these moments of loss, but taking a path through them to a deeper knowing of God in all things.

Reader 1:*Reflection*

Allowing someone to touch you where you are already hurt is a real act of faith. Yet Jesus comes to Thomas to allow him to do just that. Jesus is making an act of faith in Thomas and becoming vulnerable again. For Thomas the issue is different. It is as if Thomas needs to know that this is the same Jesus as he knew before, the one he had listened to and shared life with for three years. The only way he knew that he could not be deceived was by seeing the wounds, and touching them. By seeing the signs of the death he had witnessed, and yet touching someone who was alive, Thomas became convinced that, in Jesus, death itself had been overcome.

In touching what is painful in another person, we awaken the possibility of a deeper relationship of trust, and a more earthy appreciation of the mystery of life. God is to be found, not only in the high emotion of religion, but in the messy, sometimes violent, accidents and disappointments of life. He is the God who has lived through that kind of physical and psychological pain. He can then touch our wounds, look us in the eye and say, "I know".

God speaks to us with the authority of one who has suffered, and is with us on the journey that leads to resurrection. Like Thomas, we need to know that Jesus is with us in the darkness and suffering of our lives. It is only when we have the courage to let Jesus touch our wounds, that believing in the resurrection takes on an earthy as well as eternal energy.

**Reader 1:***Reflection*

People get stuck because they can't see things, from another angle or find a bigger pattern. It is only when someone really listens that others can help us look at things from a different perspective. What most people need is a good listening to, rather than a good talking to. When someone really listens to us we know it, we know we have been heard. At that point little miracles can happen. The other person sees into us from a different angle. They can show us things that we may have missed.

The two disciples trusted the stranger on their journey, shared their own disappointment, and were gifted with a new way of seeing. Their energy levels were transformed, and their direction in life was literally reversed. But they only realised this in retrospect. While they were talking they were focussed totally on the problem of the cross, without realising that the energy of the resurrection was already burning brightly inside them. This stranger, their companion, was looking at their experience from an infinite point of view. The point of view of a loving God who meets people in suffering. Realising that suffering might become a way to God was an amazing piece of news for the two disciples, and one that moved them deeper into their own journey of faith.

The Risen Lord Reveals Himself at the Breaking of Bread

Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

From the holy gospel according to Luke

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 recognized 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. *Luke 24*

Reader 1:

Reflection

We sometimes think that when God breaks through into our lives he will appear surrounded by angels and heavenly music. In fact God often comes to us in the ordinary moments and is only recognised in retrospect. Jesus spent a lot of time in meals, in being sociable. He was courageous in conversation, and seemed to enjoy ordinary events, and be able to see through to deeper needs and potential. The ordinariness of the meal at Emmaus, at the end of a long walk, was the very place where Jesus let his risen presence be recognised. It is as if Jesus is challenging us to find him within our own relationships. The kingdom of God is among you, Jesus reminds us. In our friendships and in the people we work with. Sometimes, in breaking open the bread of our own lives in conversation, it seems that Jesus himself is there again, a hidden guest at our side. Those are the times when words can run out of meaning and a sacred silence settles on us. At other times it becomes that moment of recognition when we are challenged in faith, like the disciples, to say "It is the Lord".

The Risen Lord Confirms the Faith of Thomas

Leader: We adore you and bless you O Risen Lord.

All: Because by your death and resurrection you have given life to the world.

Leader:

A reading from the holy gospel according to John

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." *John 20:24-29*

