



3rd Sunday of Easter

19th April 2026



Hearts Burning with Hope

Greetings my brothers and sisters in Christ, again a great joy to be here, as we come together to celebrate the 3rd Sunday after Easter. I pray, that today's message will continue to lift all our spirits, as we journey together, and encourage us, as we live out our lives as Christians, servants of Christ our Lord, committed to lives of service, in His Kingdom!

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we gather together as living stones, part of your Church, we ask the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts, kindling in them the fire of your love.

Almighty God, speak to us through your Holy Spirit, and as we walk in the light of your Spirit may we grow in wisdom, always rejoicing in the comfort He brings, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Gospel reading, set down for today is from St Luke's gospel, **Luke 24. 13-25**, the story of the walk to Emmaus, and that story really still resonates with me, some 35 years later, from an experience I had on my Cursillo weekend back in 1990.

On the final day of our Cursillo, we were asked to participate in what was called 'the Emmaus walk'. The guidelines from the Cursillo manual for an Emmaus walk states, as follows:-

"It is an opportunity for personal reflection before the final Eucharist of our weekend."

We were all reminded about the elements of the Emmaus story from Luke's gospel and then we were invited to choose a partner for the walk, either from the team or us guests and to walk as if Jesus was accompanying us.

The manual goes on to say..."It is a good time to reflect prayerfully on your experiences of the last three days. You may like to speak about how Christ has spoken to you, and think about your future response to Him."

This can be a time of real inspiration for all and enable you to unpack your life experiences and make some sort of sense of them.

That's what Jesus did for the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and that's what it did to me, all those years ago. The start of a wonderful new life journey, with wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ, like you here today!

Whilst I was researching for today's message, I came across an interesting item, on YouTube, which to me, relates beautifully to the spiritual element of the Emmaus walk, what our Christian journey is all about....taking time to be with our Lord as we journey along life's bumpy road! You can watch the clip on YouTube, just type in Joshua Bell Subway, if you want to check it out!

The background to the video clip, reads as follows:-

"On January 12th, 2007, an amazing thing happened near the Metro station in Washington DC. A young man wearing jeans and a long-sleeved t-shirt began to play the violin. It was evident to all who passed, and especially those who paused, that the young man had talent. He played for 45 minutes, enjoyed the hearty applause from the select few who stopped and, when finished, he picked up his violin case and deposited the handful of coins – \$32 worth – that had been unceremoniously chucked into it, into his pocket and whistled his way away from the station.

Some would have walked away wondering why their hearts had burned with beauty after the young man's performance.

Amazingly, if they had shown up at the Boston Symphony Hall three days earlier, they would have paid \$100 to hear Joshua Bell, one of the preeminent violinists on the planet, play his 1713 Stradivarius.

Hundreds had the opportunity to stop and hear the master, Joshua Bell, play for free, but most were too busy and missed out on the opportunity to have their hearts set on fire.

I could see myself in that "missed opportunity" group until that Sunday in November 1990 when I experienced my Emmaus moment, walking with a wonderful brother in Christ, that changed my life!

When Jesus appeared to Cleopas and his friend on the road to Emmaus, ***they had no idea*** it was the Master of all Creation walking with them. Without cost and without reservation, we could say that ***Jesus 'sang' the Music of Salvation and the Song of Hope*** to these two men, as they walked along together.

While so many in Israel had passed Jesus by, these two had front-row seats to the masterpiece. Can we relate to this, over our life experiences? I can!

And when they had finished, and Jesus had disappeared from their midst, it almost sounds as though they were breathless. ***'Were not our hearts burning within us?'*** This is what the risen Jesus does for all of humanity. Jesus offers himself, free of charge, and the time we spend with him is full of beauty and the majesty of the ***'Father's Song of Salvation'***.

Have we heard the song lately?

Ask ourselves, when was the last time our heart burned within us for the sake of faith?

As followers of Christ, we are called to walk beside others, listening to their stories, just as Jesus listened to the disciples. And welcoming them into our community of faith, where they can bring their hopes – dashed or still growing – and their questions – spoken or still lingering in the depths of the heart– so that they will feel accepted and valued.

As we break bread together today, may we recognise the risen Christ in our midst and may we go out with our hearts burning with re-ignited hope. ***Amen.***