

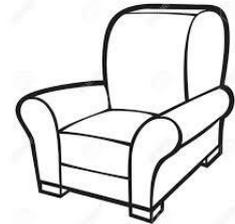
On the Emmaus Road

Welcome to this meditation, which can last for as long or short a time as you need.

Preparation

Have a look through the pages that follow. It would be helpful if you can print out the Finger Labyrinth and the Celtic knot, and have some colouring pens or pencils to hand for when you get to that part. You will need your Bible, and, if you like to jot your thoughts down, a notebook and a pen would be handy. And please bring a small piece of bread, as part of this meditation involves eating reflectively.

When you have gathered the things that you need, take a few minutes just to sit in the quiet, to feel the chair underneath you, to settle into the place where you are. If thoughts or plans intrude, just acknowledge the thought and hand it over to God, so that you can become quiet inside as well as outside, and become more open to the Spirit within you. When you are ready, move on to the next page.



Read Luke 24:13-35 – The Emmaus Road

Read the passage though slowly, twice, taking in all the words and allowing them to sink into your mind. Now use your imagination to picture to yourself the second part of that story.

Cleopas, the unnamed disciple and Jesus are arriving at Emmaus as the day is coming to a close.

Who are you in the story? Are you one of the two who have walked with Jesus? Are you an onlooker? Are you someone who lives in the house where Jesus is invited in to eat?

What are you wearing? What can you see around you? What can you hear?

Jesus walks ahead of the disciples as though he were going on, but they urge him to stay.

What do the disciples say? How does Jesus respond?

So he went in to stay with them.

Look around you at the house you enter. See the welcome that is offered, and watch the preparations for the meal that will be shared.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

Watch as Jesus takes the position of host in taking and blessing the bread. Sense the confusion as he does this. Watch his hands as he blesses and breaks the bread and passes it to everyone around the table. What do you notice?

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him...

What is the atmosphere like in the room at this moment? How do you feel, recognizing Jesus in this way?

... and he vanished from their sight.

Join in the conversation that follows, about Jesus risen from death, yet being here with you. What do you want to say to Jesus about this?



Following the reflection, take the bread that you have set aside, and hold it in your hand.

Look at it closely, taking in the straight edges, if you cut it, or the rough edges if you tore it off.

Smell it, and note what is happening in your nose, mouth and mind as you do so.

Put the bread in your mouth, but don't chew it just yet. Feel the texture of it and note how your mouth is responding.

Now chew the bread, slowly, taking your time.

When you have swallowed it, sit with it a little longer, thinking about what is happening in your mouth, throat, stomach.

Think about the meals you have shared with others, and the sense of togetherness they have brought.

Have you ever had an unexpected guest to a meal? How did you cope with that?

Think about sharing Communion at your church, and all the people who receive with you.

Jesus has been present at all those meals, and at all the meals you ate alone.

In the act of eating, and remembering him, we are together in Spirit, part of a family that we might not be able to see and talk to at the moment, but a family that is nonetheless real and cares about us.

As you think about Jesus present with you in your eating, follow this link to listen to “Be thou my Vision”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBD7Et0-kHQ&list=PLiYsVLD9E8KjaR28ybIplzTXbr6lXy8xp&index=4&t=0s>

Prayers

Living, Loving Lord,
as we travel through these difficult days,
**open our eyes to your presence
and our hearts to your love.**

Like the travellers on the road to Emmaus,
we so often fail to recognise you,
wondering where you are
and feeling deserted,
when your Spirit is always beside us and within us.
Forgive us Lord.

**Open our eyes to your presence
and our hearts to your love.**

We thank you that we can see you in
the NHS staff, all the keyworkers,
and the helpful neighbours
selflessly devoting themselves to caring for us.
May your strength uphold them.
**Open our eyes to your presence
and our hearts to your love.**

We thank you that we can see you in
our fellow travellers, our loved ones,
our friends and church family.
May your peace enfold them.

**Open our eyes to your presence
and our hearts to your love.**

We thank you that we can know that
however hard the path,
or bleak the landscape,
You, who travelled through Good Friday for us
promise us that Easter Sunday is our destination.

**Open our eyes to your presence
and our hearts to your love.**

Amen.

Labyrinths were used in the past by those who could not make a pilgrimage to a shrine to pray. Instead of travelling, they walked in to the centre of a labyrinth laid out on a church floor, and out again.

Use this finger labyrinth to follow the Emmaus Road journey. As you trace the path with your finger, you will see that it seems to be taking you towards the centre and then takes you around again. So imagine the disciples “talking round in circles” as you go in. In the centre, picture again that moment of recognition as Jesus broke the bread. Stay there a while and enjoy his presence. Then make your way back out of the labyrinth, noting the difference it makes to your journeying, knowing that Jesus is alive and with you – and that he was with you even when you didn’t know it.



Finish your time with this Celtic Blessing, and then, as you reflect on your time on the Emmaus Road, colour in the Celtic knot, or another picture you might have to hand.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Love of God.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Grace of Christ.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Light of Life.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Peace of Jesus.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Power of the Spirit.

Before you,
behind you
and all around you
The Father,
The Son
and The Holy Spirit

Before you,
behind you
and all around you,
above you,
below you
and within you.



