

*The Road to Emmaus - Introduction and Poem by Fr. J Michael Sparough, SJ*

Easter Sunday morning, a day of resurrection, new life and joy and yet that first easter begins with sadness and confusion. Consider Mary Magdalene who goes to the tomb and not finding the body lingers there, her eyes streaming with tears. Or Peter and John who race to the tomb, Peter's heart heavy with guilt for having denied Jesus three times. Or two disciples who walk the ancient road to Emmaus, their hearts filled with grief at having seen the christ crucified. Isn't it so often that way with us? Before sadness can part and we experience the power of the resurrection, we have to go down that road, we have to complete the journey.

I wrote a poem about this not too long ago that I'd like to share with you because our hearts, just like nature at the beginning of spring, take time to show signs of new life. Come, walk that road with me.

*Our hearts falling hard as the ground we trod;  
Our eyes wept dry as the dust we trample.*

*When, without invitation, without hesitation,  
A stranger walks with us on this road to despair.*

*Teasing out the details of what our own hopes had been,  
He listens on and on until our grief can say no more.*

*Only then can his words water our withered spirits.*

*Gently chiding, strongly guiding, he weaves a tale of hidden glory  
Tucked within the pages of ancient prophecies of hope.*

*Only later did we recall how fiercely our hearts did burn.*

*Now it is our turn, a time to beg him to linger;  
A request he will never refuse*

*For his very presence is sacred space;  
Every home he visits a sanctuary,  
His visitation no longer confined to history.*

*For those who have eyes open to see,  
His body bread, blessed broken and shared  
is forever so much more than a meal.*

*We journey back from where we once despaired,  
to meet brothers and sisters, who share the vision,  
who break the bread,  
who live lives of resurrection.*