

MARCH 2025 PRAYER SERVICE

Prayer Service for Chapter 7 of “*On the Road to Emmaus*” Study Topic

The Chapter focuses on Luke 24:30-31

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TIME FOR SCRIPTURE:

The passage from **Luke 24:30-31** describes a significant moment in the post-resurrection narrative of Jesus, mainly focusing on the encounter with the two disciples on the road to **Emmaus**. This event is pivotal as it illustrates the **recognition of the Risen Christ** through the act of breaking bread.

Luke 24:30-31 serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of the **Eucharist** in the life of the Church. It illustrates how the act of breaking bread is not merely a ritual but a profound encounter with the **Risen Christ**, who continues to reveal **Himself** to believers. This passage invites the faithful to **recognize Christ in the Eucharist** and understand the **Scriptures** in light of **His resurrection**, fostering a deeper communion **with Him** and one another in the **Church**.

In the broader context of **Luke 24**, the disciples are initially unaware of **Jesus' identity** as they walk and converse about the recent events surrounding **His crucifixion** and the reports of **His resurrection**. Their hearts are heavy with **confusion and disappointment**, reflecting their struggle to **comprehend the fulfillment of Jesus' mission**. As they journey, **Jesus** joins them, though their eyes are “**held**” so that they do not recognize **Him** at first.

When they arrive at **Emmaus**, the disciples invite **Jesus** to stay with them. It is during the meal that the critical moment occurs. As **Jesus** takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them, their eyes are opened, and they recognize **Him**. This act of breaking bread is deeply significant, as it mirrors the actions of **Jesus** during the **Last Supper** and emphasizes the **Eucharistic nature** of this encounter. The breaking of bread is a sacramental sign of **Jesus's** presence and **His** ongoing relationship with **His** followers.

A scripture passage that complements Luke 24:30-31 is John 6:51-58. This passage elaborates on the theme of **Jesus as the Bread of Life**, which resonates with the **recognition of Christ** in the breaking of bread in **Luke's** account.

In this passage, Jesus declares:

- **Living Bread:** He identifies **Himself** as the “**living bread**” that came down from heaven, emphasizing that whoever eats this bread will live forever. This statement connects directly to the **Eucharistic theme** present in Luke 24, where the act of breaking bread leads to the recognition of **Jesus**.
- **Eternal Life:** **Jesus** states that the bread **He gives is His flesh**, which **He offers for the life of the world**. This highlights the sacrificial nature of **His** mission and the life-giving power of the **Eucharist**.
- **Communion with Christ:** The passage emphasizes the intimate communion established through the Eucharist: “**He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood**”

abides in me, and I in him." This reflects the deep relationship believers are invited to enter with **Christ**, like the disciples' experience of recognizing **Him** in breaking bread.

John 6:51-58 complements **Luke 24:30-31** by deepening the understanding of **Jesus as the Bread of Life** and the significance of the **Eucharist** in the lives of believers. Both passages invite the faithful to **recognize Christ's presence in the sacrament** and to **embrace the transformative power of communion with Him**, which **leads to eternal life**. This connection enriches the **theological and spiritual dimensions of the Eucharistic celebration within the Church**.

Luke 24:30-31

And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.

John 6:51-58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever."

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION:

SHARED PRAYER ON SCRIPTURAL TEXT:

The intent is reflection in the form of a prayer, not discussion.

PRAYER INTENTIONS:

- Pass card or cross, so people can pass gracefully and the team knows when the prayer is complete.
- The team should respond at the end of each person's turn, for example, "Lord, hear our prayer".

LITURGICAL PRAYER:

A psalm that complements **Luke 24:30-31** is **Psalms 31**, particularly verses that emphasize **trust in God** and the **experience of divine deliverance**. This psalm resonates with the **themes of recognition and understanding found in the Emmaus narrative**.

Psalms 31 complements **Luke 24:30-31** by reinforcing trust, recognition, and divine deliverance themes. Both texts invite the faithful to recognize **God's presence** in their lives, mainly through the **Eucharist**, and to find **strength and courage** in their faith. The psalm serves as a reminder of the **transformative power of encountering God**, which is vividly illustrated in the disciples' **experience on the road to Emmaus**.

Psalm 31

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*In you, LORD, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame.
In your righteousness deliver me; incline your ear to me; make haste to rescue me!
Be my rock of refuge, a stronghold to save me.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*I will rejoice and be glad in your mercy, once you have seen my misery,
and gotten to know the distress of my soul.
You will not abandon me into enemy hands, but will set my feet in a free and open space.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am in distress; affliction is wearing down my eyes,
my throat and my insides.
My life is worn out by sorrow, and my years by sighing.
My strength fails in my affliction; my bones are wearing down.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*I am forgotten, out of mind like the dead; I am like a worn-out tool.
I hear the whispers of the crowd; terrors are all around me.
They conspire together against me; they plot to take my life.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*But I trust in you, LORD; I say, "You are my God."
My destiny is in your hands; rescue me from my enemies,
from the hands of my pursuers.
Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your mercy.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*Blessed be the LORD, marvelously he showed to me his mercy in a fortified city.
Though I had said in my alarm, "I am cut off from your eyes."
Yet you heard my voice, my cry for mercy, when I pleaded with you for help.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

*Love the LORD, all you who are faithful to him.
The LORD protects the loyal, but repays the arrogant in full.
Be strong and take heart, all who hope in the LORD.*

Response: *In you, Lord, I take refuge.*

CONCLUSION OF PRAYER TIME:

A prayer that reflects the themes found in **Luke 24:30-31**, **John 6:51-58**, and **Psalm 31** includes **gratitude for the Eucharist**, a desire for more **profound recognition of Christ**, and a **plea for trust in God's providence**.

All: Heavenly Father, In the breaking of the bread, You reveal Your Son, Jesus Christ, to us. Just as the disciples on the road to Emmaus recognized Him in the simple act of sharing a meal, may our hearts be opened to see Him in the Eucharist, the living bread that came down from heaven. Help us to understand the profound mystery of His presence among us, nourishing our souls and granting us eternal life.

Lord Jesus, You invite us to partake in Your body and blood, assuring us that those who eat and drink of You abide in You and You in them. Strengthen our faith as we approach the altar so that we may receive You with reverence and joy, recognizing the gift of salvation You offer through Your sacrifice. May this sacred communion transform our lives, empowering us to share the good news of Your resurrection with all we encounter.

In times of distress, we turn to You, O Lord, as the psalmist did in Psalm 31. We place our trust in Your unfailing love and protection. When we feel lost or overwhelmed, remind us of Your presence and the assurance that You are our refuge and strength. Help us to be strong and take heart, knowing that You are with us in every trial and tribulation.

As we reflect on these sacred texts, may we grow in our understanding of Your Word and deepen our relationship with You. Let our lives be a testament to the hope and joy found in Christ, who is our light and salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DEEP POOLING:

This is a time to share on more serious matters or when the input of the group is requested. This will not necessarily happen at all meetings.

SHARING ON THE ENDEAVORS:

We join teams in order to enlist the help of others in growing closer to God. The “endeavors” are practices which we voluntarily assume. They have been found to be a means of drawing us closer as a couple and in furthering our spiritual growth. By sharing on the endeavors at the team meeting we seek help and encouragement from our teammates in our journey.