

# Given time



Lord, who walked alongside his disciples in their grief and reinvented the past for them, turning tragedy into triumph, strengthen our faith, to know that you are in the midst of everything in our lives, too. Amen.

## Stations of the resurrection

### Station 10: Supper at Emmaus

by Richard Greatrex

Was it just because they had reached the familiar territory of home, that the ground they walked on seemed greener, friendlier? Or had the stranger's opening up of the scriptures filled them with a fresh vision for life? Whichever, despite the rigours of the journey, their steps were lighter than when they started. There was no hesitation about welcoming the stranger into their home.

But then the unmistakable command: take, bless, break, share. It was not so much what he did, but the way he did it. The gestures were so familiar, the intonations in his voice so memorable, the stress on certain words that were worn into their consciousness. There was no other person this could possibly be. In his words on the road there had been the first glimmer of understanding, but in hospitality there was revelation.

Christ is risen, he is risen indeed. 🌱



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Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Zephaniah 3:14-end, Psalm 116:1-3, 10-end and Luke 24:13-35

The story from Luke is familiar – two disciples, heartbroken, grieving, “looking sad”, trudge along the road from Jerusalem, the city which three days earlier was the scene of so much drama. The cult that Cleopas and his companion belonged to had been quashed when their leader was unjustly tried, tortured and put to a brutal death. When the stranger draws alongside, Cleopas tells him that they had hoped that Jesus would be “the one to redeem Israel”. Their dejection is palpable.

The two men are bound for Emmaus, a village whose exact location is now lost to history. Perhaps they're desperate for a break from the chaos of the city, possibly they're afraid for their own safety. Whatever the reason for their journey, it's one of the darker moments in the New Testament.

So it's astonishing that the unimaginable joy that they are about to experience will spring from the very source of their despondency. It's summed up by Fr Denis McBride in his book *The Road to Emmaus and Beyond*, when he writes: “The past is not dead; it lingers on as a resource for meaning or it waits for new interpretation.”

It's a wonderful idea – that, far from being fixed in history, the past can change through our reinterpretation – the realisation that, even in the darkest moments, when no redemption or resurrection seemed remotely possible, God was there all the while. It's why the writer of the book of Zephaniah, today's alternative Old Testament reading, celebrates the fact that “the Lord, is in your midst... The Lord, your God, is in your midst”. 🌱

## International Chernobyl Disaster

### Remembrance Day

by Lisa Tulfer

Today is International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day, which was proclaimed by the United Nations in 2016 on the thirtieth anniversary of the 1986 nuclear disaster. The events will be familiar all of us who were around at the time – the explosion and fire at the nuclear power station, the radioactive cloud

that spread across the USSR and far beyond, the evacuation of people from a large area, the ghostly remains of deserted settlements, the poisoned land, people becoming sick and dying. Deaths resulting from the Chernobyl disaster are estimated (depending on sources) at between four thousand and ninety-three thousand.

This day of remembrance is intended to raise awareness of the wider consequences of the disaster, and of the potential dangers of nuclear energy in general, for example the accident at Fukushima in 2011. And, in a kind of resurrection, despite radiation and against all expectations, nature is flourishing in the Chernobyl exclusion zone. 🌱

“Every knee shall bow... every tongue shall give praise to God.” Romans 14:11