

A SPIRITUAL RETREAT

The Gospel of Luke recounts a story of two disciples who encountered Christ after the Resurrection. The two had seen Christ crucified, they had heard some others say that Jesus was Risen, but they didn't understand any of it. They were walking back to Emmaus to give up their calling as disciples and go back to their old way of life.

Along the way, a stranger joined them and they began telling him how depressed, confused and lonely they felt. Jesus, the man they had thought was the Messiah, was now dead. The Stranger began to explain the promises of Scripture and that night, as He blessed and broke bread, the disciples' eyes were opened and they realized that this Stranger was Jesus, alive and in their midst.

If you have ever had the feeling that Christ might be right beside you, and yet you didn't recognize Him, or if you would like to know Christ better, then you might want to consider the spiritual renewal of a Walk to Emmaus. This event is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It is held at a retreat center and will involve three concentrated and very enjoyable days. Discussions will center on fifteen presentations led by laity and clergy around the theme of God's grace, and how that grace comes alive in the Christian community and expresses itself in the world.

Emmaus is not like some land sales deal or a pseudo-therapeutic encounter session. The program is presented with great integrity and authenticity. It is informative and intensely practical. You will leave with information and insights that can help you all of your life. Emmaus is also spiritual, offering the opportunity to participate in daily worship and celebration of Holy Communion.

Surprising to some, **Emmaus is fun!** You laugh and eat until your sides ache. You share fellowship and foolishness in a wonderfully meaningful way, but most of all you receive more love than you ever expected. This pure, unconditional love comes not only from Jesus, but from people who have organized your walk and from dozens of people whom you will never meet.

Most important: **Emmaus works.** Jesus is alive and walks with us every day, and we can see Him if we learn to open our eyes. The participants are helped to focus on God as known in Jesus Christ and inspired, challenged and equipped for Christian action wherever they are. These seventy-two hours can be the beginning of a life-long walk filled with the strength, joy and peace for which we all yearn.

Before making any decision about Emmaus, speak with someone who has attended a Walk and learn what dimension it has added to his or her life. At the very least, pray about the possibility of going. It just may be one of the best decisions you ever made.