

## Mitch Kidd's Homily for April 19, 2026

Let us pray for open hearts, especially where things feel unclear or unfinished. Please be seated.

In our Gospel story, we have two people walking together in grief. One of these people is named as Cleopas, while the other person is not named at all. They are walking from Jerusalem, where everything went so horribly wrong and fell apart, to Emmaus, an ordinary place where they are going to try to come to terms with everything that has happened.

Nothing is clear yet and nothing makes sense. Even when Jesus arrives on the scene, they don't recognize Jesus and they tell him about everything that has happened over the past three days. Jesus simply walks with them. Jesus is present in this moment of suffering.

In our own lives, suffering is a reality we all face and yet talking about suffering, grief and loss is something we seem to be uncomfortable with. There is almost a preoccupation with being happy and positive and who can blame us. It's hard to encounter suffering and not feel like we need to fix it or give it meaning. How often have we uttered or been told that everything happens for a reason? That's hard to take in the midst of grief and suffering.

Jesus travels beside these two people who are clearly deeply suffering in their grief. He doesn't try to fix it. He just stays with the grief and lets them talk it out. He doesn't give meaning to what has happened, he takes it all in.

The grief of the people in this story is not just personal grief. They had hoped for change in their lived reality, they had hoped for liberation. This is a clear example of collective grief. It is the grief of people who thought that things might finally be different.

Even today we experience collective grief. We are surrounded by communities who are still waiting. Communities who are still waiting because they experience homelessness, racism, discrimination because of gender identity and sexual orientation. Communities face barriers because of visible

and invisible diversities and characteristics. As a world, we are in the midst of collective grief that needs space to be recognized.

Grief like this is not weakness. It is a sign that something is wrong. It is a sign that we care about one another. It is a sign that we yearn for things to be different. These injustices are everyone's concern.

In our story today, Jesus only explains things after he walks beside his travel companions and listens. Jesus knows that meaning only comes after reflection and talking about what happened. Sometimes, meaning never comes at all. Jesus knows that too. Some stuff just makes no sense. Yet God stays beside us no matter where we find ourselves on our grief journeys. We as God's people are encouraged to keep showing up for one another's grief journeys. We don't have to force meaning onto our grief or anyone else's grief. All we can do is to be present for ourselves and for one another. We are not alone on the road we are traveling.

May we move into the coming week conscious of our own grief and the grief of others. May we make space for ourselves and for one another to grieve and may we know that God is present in the midst of our suffering even when we can't find or accept it. May we understand that God is with us in our collective grief too. Amen.