



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EAST CAROLINA

THE RIGHT REVEREND ROBERT S. SKIRVING, BISHOP

Wednesday in Easter Week: April 23, 2025

Dear Friends,

I hope and pray that your Easter Sunday worship was marked with much joy and celebration! If social media were to tell the story, there have certainly been many images of beautifully adorned churches and beautifully dressed church goers, lots of brightly colored flowers, and more than a few chocolate eggs! We all know, however, that these images do not tell the full story. Some would even say that these elements of our Easter celebration distract us from the real message of Easter.

Of the various resurrection stories offered to us in the scriptures of our tradition, my favorite is that of the walk to Emmaus, as told in Luke's gospel. Two disciples of Jesus are walking home from Jerusalem on the day that his grave had been found empty. A third person joined them on the journey, but they were kept from recognizing him as their risen Lord Jesus. It was only when the stranger accepted their invitation to stop and share their evening meal, and then took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, that their eyes were opened, and they were able to recognize him.

The collect for use on the Wednesday in Easter Week is based on this story, and reads:

*O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Whether it is deep sorrow or great joy that captures our hearts, we become distracted from the presence of the risen Lord Jesus in our midst. We become preoccupied with our own agenda or with the demands of everyday life, and we forget to take time to seek the Lord and to rejoice when the risen Jesus appears. The daily news, whether local or global, too often breaks our hearts, filling us with darkness and despair.

This Easter season, I invite you to pray today's collect with me, inviting God to "open the eyes of our faith" that we might see Jesus, risen from the grave, that our hearts might burn within us, as they did for the disciples of Jesus when he opened the scriptures to them on the road to Emmaus, that our lives might bear witness to the transforming power of resurrection, and that all the world might be drawn to God's light and love.

Yours in Christ,



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