



**Third Sunday of Easter (Year A)
Migrant Jubilee Cross Pilgrimage**

Homily

**Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB
Archbishop of Perth**

**Saturday 18 April, 2026
St Mary's Cathedral, Perth**

Tonight's gospel, the beautiful story of the encounter between the Risen Jesus and two of His disciples who were walking to Emmaus, has a lot to offer us as we welcome the Migrant Jubilee Cross to this Cathedral and to our Archdiocese. The idea of a pilgrim cross emerged last year in the Jubilee Year when the whole Church throughout the world focused on the challenge of migration in our time and the gift which it brings to countries such as ours.

The story of Emmaus tells of Jesus accompanying people on a journey. For so many of us either we, or our immediate forbears, arrived in this country after a sometimes long, often difficult, and certainly challenging journey. For our forebears, and probably for us too, our journey through life has had moments when our hearts have burned within us with hope, as happened for the two disciples in tonight's gospel, but equally we have had times when, like those two disciples, we have trudged along, trying to cope both hopes that have been dashed and dreams that have turned into nightmares. This is certainly the experience of many migrants and refugees who have come to this country full of hope but who, at least for a time and sometimes for a long time, have only encountered difficulties, misunderstanding and rejection.

We began our liturgy this evening with the Smoking Ceremony and the Welcome to Country. This remind us that long before Europeans came to this ancient land, the Aboriginal people had already been here for tens of thousands of years. In speaking as we do and as we must of the multicultural nature of modern day Australia, we must never forget but always honour the original inhabitants of this Land of the Holy Spirit.

But as the words of the Welcome to Country reminded us on Thursday night when we ordained a new bishop for this diocese, a man who originally came from the Philippines, *we are one, but we are many and from all the lands on earth we come. We share a dream, and sing with one voice, I am, you are, we are Australian.*

These words from a popular song express an ideal which we often struggle to realise. We want to be a welcoming country, a tolerant country, indeed a country where, as my friend the retired



Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox Jewish Congregation here in Perth reminds me, we don't just tolerate people from different countries, cultures, faiths and traditions: we strive to respect and value them.

As Christians, we take Jesus as our model. We take Him seriously when He says to us that He is the Way we should follow, He is the Truth to which we should commit ourselves, He is the source of that fulness of life for which we all long. In tonight's gospel, He indeed shows us the Way as He teaches us an important lesson about welcoming, about encounter, about respect for others.

He joins the two disciples on their way, fully aware of what they are doing and what they are thinking. They are walking away from the place where all their dreams had been destroyed, and all their hopes had been dashed. *"Our own hope,"* they said, *"had been that Jesus would be the one to set us free – but instead he was tortured and killed"*. Jesus listened patiently to them, He let them tell their story, He let them unburden their hearts. In other words, He met them where they were, rather than where some perhaps might think they should have been. And then, little by little, He began to stir up in them again the hopes they thought they had lost forever. And, of course, they finally recognised who He was when he sat down to have a meal with them.

Encountering, accompanying, listening, sharing – this is the Way of Jesus, a way that eventually leads to a deeper grasp of the meaning of the journey and a rekindling of hope in place of despair. It is what Pope Leo recently described as "God's Style". This *Style of God* is spelt out a little further in one of Saint Paul's letters, and perhaps his words can serve both as an examination of conscience for each one of us and as a source of guidance and inspiration as we strive, in our own daily lives and context, to build a society where everyone who comes to this land is not just tolerated but treated with dignity, with acceptance, and with a recognition on our part that we have as much to receive from them as we have to give them.

Let your love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any are in need you must share with them – and you should make hospitality your special care Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (cf Rom 12:9-13, 21).