

APRIL 19, 2026 FATHER TOMASZ SKIBINSKI

As we begin today, on this third Sunday of Easter, the Week of Prayer for Vocations, which I encourage you to do wholeheartedly, today this Gospel which we had just heard is, to me at least, is like a paradigm to understand, really, the vocations to the priesthood.

And this narrative reveals several stages that mirror the priestly call and formation. And this is what I would like to offer to you today, because it's true just as the disciples were met by Christ in the midst of their confusion, it is often that priests are called in the midst of human confusion.

They were discouraged after the crucifixion of Jesus. Their hopes were shattered. They said, "We had hoped that he would be the one to redeem Israel," and priestly vocation often begins in the midst of human searching, questions, and even disappointments.

A priest is not someone who has always understood everything about Christ, but someone who Christ meets on the road. Vocation begins with Christ taking the initiative. Then Christ walks with those he calls. The risen Christ draws near to the disciples and he walks with them, and this is what a priestly vocation is. It's a companionship with Christ.

Before preaching or celebrating sacraments, a future priest must first learn to walk with the Lord. Priestly formation is essentially this journey. The priest is also formed by the Word. Jesus explains the scriptures to them and opens their mind to understand the scriptures, just as the life of the future priest is shaped by scripture and tradition and the paschal mystery, and the priest must be a man whose heart burns with the Word of God.

The priest also recognizes Christ in the Eucharist. This becomes a turning point at the table and the breaking of the bread, which is the echo

of the Last Supper, and this is exactly what priestly identity is. It is inseparable from the Eucharist. The priest is the one who does this at every Mass.

And then, they return to their brothers. They're being sent back to the community. After recognizing Jesus, they immediately go back to Jerusalem, and this encounter with Christ leads to mission and to the proclamation, "The Lord has been truly raised from the dead."

So, this story ends in evangelization, which is at the heart of priestly ministry and of every vocation. So, I encourage you to pray for vocations that, really, the Lord may raise many holy vocations for his church.