

PRAYER FOR LIVING

**DAILY REFLECTIONS FOR
LITURGICAL YEAR B ~ APRIL**

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verbum dei

Prayer for Living Daily Reflections for Liturgical Year B

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Thursday, 1st April, Holy Thursday.

Exodus 12:1-8,11-14, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-15

Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, having loved those who were his in the world, loved them to the end. They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray him. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.' 'Never!' said Peter. 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have no share with me.' Simon Peter said, 'Well then, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus said, 'No one who has had a bath needs washing, such a person is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.' He knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, 'though not all of you are'. When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand', he said, 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'

Following the example of Jesus

Peter looking at Jesus, the Master and Teacher, stopping down to wash the dirty and dusty feet of each disciple. He was horrified and embarrassed because he recognised the unworthiness of each of them to have Jesus at their feet. When Jesus came to him, he said: "Never! You shall never wash my feet". Yet, Jesus insisted

because Peter had to learn to accept Jesus' unconditional love as a gift, rather than as something that he needed to achieve by being worthy and perfect. It was only by experiencing himself being so much loved by Jesus that Peter could then truly follow the path of serving others with humility and love. Judas was present and he too had Jesus washing his feet. However, his heart was too hardened to receive this gift of love, and thus, he could not give love to others.

As we celebrate Maundy Thursday, let us allow ourselves to be unconditionally loved by Jesus and experience Him being constantly at our feet. It is only when we are open to receive His love will we be able to copy the example of love and service that Jesus has shown us.

Question for reflection:

How can I live the message of today's gospel in my life?

**Friday, 2nd April, Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord.
Isaiah 52:13-53, 12, Hebrew 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1-19:42**

When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another, 'Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.' In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled: They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothes. That is what the soldiers did. Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.' Then to the disciple, he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed and, so that the scripture should be completely fulfilled,

he said: 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of sour wine stood there; so, putting a sponge soaked in the wine on a hyssop stick, they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the wine he said, 'It is fulfilled'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

At the heart of Calvary, the light of love shines

We celebrate today as 'Good Friday' because the light of God's unconditional and faithful love to all humanity is revealed on the cross amid the darkness of rejection, hatred, suffering, injustice and death. Contemplating Jesus on the cross, we remember His words: "*When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to me.*" (John 12:32), and indeed, men and women of every generation, nation, language have been touched by His love that is stronger than sin, stronger than death. Today, we are one of those who have been drawn to Jesus, the God of Love. It is for us to be overly sentimental about Jesus' death on the cross to the extent that we miss His call for us to bring His love to families, workplaces, parish groups, neighborhoods, etc. where love is lacking and to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who continue to be crucified by the injustice of poverty and discrimination.

Today, we are invited to stand with Mary and the disciples at the foot of the cross of Jesus. There, we commit ourselves to bring God's goodness and love to those around us today.

Question for reflection:

What is the call of Jesus as I contemplate on the crucifix today?

Saturday, 3rd April, Holy Saturday.

Exodus 14:15-15:1, Romans 6:3-11, Mark 16:1-7

(Readings are taken from the mass of Easter Vigil)

When the Sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint

him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they saw that the stone -- which was very big -- had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need to be so amazed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going ahead of you to Galilee; that is where you will see him, just as he told you." '

Go back to the first experience of being loved

"But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee; that is where you will see him, just as he told you.'": These are the words of the Angel to the women. They had to tell the disciples to go back to Galilee, the place where they had received their first call to follow Jesus. What does this mean for us today?

Let us reflect on the words of Pope Francis: *"In this sense, returning to Galilee means treasuring in my heart the living memory of that call, when Jesus passed my way, gazed at me with mercy and asked me to follow him. To return there means reviving the memory of that moment when his eyes met mine, the moment when he made me realize that he loved me."* (Holy Saturday, 19th April 2014) By remembering with gratefulness the past experiences of God's love in our lives, we are called to live today by becoming witnesses of His living presence. As we celebrate the joy of Easter, let us renew our commitment to follow the Resurrected Jesus.

Question for reflection:

What is Jesus' invitation to 'go back to Galilee' mean for me?

**Sunday, 4th April, Easter Sunday of the Lord's Resurrection.
Acts 10:34, 37-43, Colossians 3:1-4, John 20:1-9**

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,' she said, 'and we don't know where they have put him.' So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter, following him, also came up, went into the tomb, saw the linen cloths lying on the ground and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had still not understood the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The empty tomb: From death into new life

"...he saw and he believed": It was the beloved disciple who saw the empty tomb and believed that Jesus who was crucified had been raised from the dead to new life. This is the Easter faith! Mary Magdalene, Peter and the rest would come to understand the powerful significance of the empty tomb when the resurrected Christ appeared to them. Today, as we celebrate Easter, we joyfully welcome with faith the message of the empty tomb that speaks to us that sin and death do not have the last word but God's life and love.

We, as Easter people, can look at our experiences of suffering, hardship, failure, disappointment with the eyes of faith because we are never alone in these struggles. We believe that the God of life is with us. This Easter, let us renew our faith in Him who has the

power to bring new life out of death. He is God who is always with us and for us.

Question for reflection:

Do I allow God, with His loving presence, to transform those moments of difficulties and pain into life?

Monday, 5th April, Monday within Easter Octave.

Acts 2: 14, 22-33, Matthew 28:8-15

Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. And suddenly, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings,' he said. And the women came up to him and, clasping his feet, they did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; there they will see me.' Now while they were on their way, some of the guards went off into the city to tell the chief priests all that had happened. These held a meeting with the elders and, after some discussion, handed a considerable sum of money to the soldiers with these instructions, 'This is what you must say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep." And should the governor come to hear of this, we undertake to put things right with him ourselves and to see that you do not get into trouble.' So they took the money and carried out their instructions, and to this day that is the story among the Jews.

Do not be afraid, go and tell!

“*Filled with awe and great joy...*”, like the women who went and saw the empty tomb, Easter fills us with wonderment and great joy because of the reality of God’s love is stronger than death. Like them, we too are sent by the Risen Jesus to go and tell, go and proclaim the truth of Easter to all those who need to hear the message of hope, joy and peace. Unlike the women, the soldiers were told by the Jewish leaders to spread false news that Jesus’

body was stolen. Yet, despite this attempt to suppress the Resurrection, the reality remains that Jesus has risen!

May we today follow the example of the women and be heralds of the Good News, a reflection of the Resurrection, by our words and by our lives.

Question to reflect:

Am I a herald of good news in the lives of others?

Tuesday, 6th April, Tuesday within Easter Octave.

Acts 2: 36-41, John 20:11-18

But Mary was standing outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, as she wept, she stooped to look inside, and saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet. They said, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' 'They have taken my Lord away,' she replied, 'and I don't know where they have put him.' As she said this she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and remove him.' Jesus said, 'Mary!' She turned round then and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbuni!' -- which means Master. Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to the brothers, and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' So Mary of Magdala told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and that he had said these things to her.

To be personally called by Jesus

Mary Magdalene saw the empty tomb and could not find the body of her Master. Overwhelmed with grief, she could not recognise Jesus when He came to her, and she thought that he was a gardener. 'Jesus said, 'Mary!' She turned round then and said to

him in Hebrew, 'Rabbuni!' -- which means Master.': At the sound of Jesus calling her name in a personal way, she recognised Him, and her sadness turned into joy.

There are many moments in life when we fail to recognise the many ways that the risen Jesus comes to us. In this Covid-19 pandemic, we might be blinded by the gloom of uncertainties and fears. Jesus continues to call us by our name because He wants to penetrate the darkness of desolation and fear that engulfs our hearts with the light of His love. In the same way that He told Mary, Jesus wants to remind us again that His Father is our Father, His God is our God. This is the good news today for us that the Risen Lord desires to bring us into the same intimate relationship that He has with God. May we find joy and peace this Easter by listening to Jesus as He calls us personally by our name and allow Him to lead us always to be in union with God.

Question for reflection:

What is Jesus' message for me in this time of prayer?

Wednesday, 7th April, Wednesday within Easter Octave.

Acts 3:1-10, Luke 24:13-35

Now that very same day, two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but their eyes were prevented from recognising him...When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them saying, 'It is nearly evening, and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they

said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?' They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

Stay with us, Lord

The two disciples had chosen to follow Jesus and had big hopes in Him as the one who could free them from political oppression. Instead, their hope was crushed as they saw Jesus being tortured and crucified. These two disciples walked with hearts heavy with sadness and grief. Along the way, the Risen Jesus walked with them though they did not recognise Him. After listening to their story, He spoke to them and made them see the bigger picture, and by doing so, He rekindled their hope once again. At the village, they asked Him to stay with them, and there, He revealed His true identity at the breaking of the bread.

Today as we pray, let us invite Jesus with these words: “*Stay with us, Lord.*” This Easter, Jesus wants to make His way into our lives. He is our faithful Companion who walks with us in our journey. As He stays with us, He opens our eyes to see events and life circumstances in a different light in order to generate new hope in us. Even when we fail to recognise Him, Jesus never stops walking with us.

Question for reflection:

When did Jesus open my eyes to His loving presence?

**Thursday, 8th April, Thursday within Easter Octave.
Acts 3:11-26, Luke 24:35-48**

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread. They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts? See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet. Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, as they were dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes. Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, was destined to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

The gift of peace

The Risen Jesus is the Good Shepherd who always seeks to look for His lost and confused sheep. Simon Peter and the two disciples of Emmaus did not go around searching for Jesus, rather it was Him who went to them. Jesus always takes the initiative to encounter us in our journey. In today's gospel, He went to His disciples, stood among them and offered them His peace: "*Peace be with you*". He brought the gift of peace to Peter who denied Him and to the rest of His disciples who abandoned Him. This is the depth of Jesus' unconditional love for His friends.

Today, Jesus stands before us in prayer and offers us His gift of peace. Our faults we committed will never stop Jesus from reaching out to us and giving us His peace. Listen attentively to His words to us: “*Peace be with you*” and allow Him to love us again. In giving His peace to us, He calls us to go out and be His peacemakers in our relationship with family and friends, in our workplace, in our parish, in our society.

Question for reflection:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, they shall be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). Am I open to receive the peace that Jesus brings to me and how can I be a peacemaker to others?

Friday, 9th April, Friday within Easter Octave

Acts 4:1-12, John 21: 1-14

Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said, 'I'm going fishing.' They replied, 'We'll come with you.' They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing that night. When it was already light, there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus called out, 'Haven't you caught anything, friends?' And when they answered, 'No,' he said, 'Throw the net out to starboard and you'll find something.' So they threw the net out and could not haul it in because of the quantity of fish. The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' At these words, 'It is the Lord,' Simon Peter tied his outer garment round him (for he had nothing on) and jumped into the water. The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net with the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land. As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' Simon Peter went aboard and dragged

the net ashore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, 'Who are you?'. They knew quite well it was the Lord. Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.

Jesus stands at the shore of our lives... to call us again

In today's gospel, Peter and the disciples, disheartened with all that had happened, decided to go back to fishing to what they had been before Jesus called them. They went back to the past. Yet, the Risen Jesus did not give up on them. He lovingly took the initiative once again to encounter His disciples and patiently renewed His call to them. Today, we too might feel stagnant in our faith and do not feel the joy of Easter. We might be living in good memories of our past experiences with God. Jesus stands at the shore of our lives and desires to redirect us to go forward and begin afresh in this Easter season. He continues to call us to follow Him to where He is leading us.

"Come and have breakfast": Jesus invited His disciples to have a meal of communion with Him. Today, in prayer, we too are invited by Jesus to a renewed relationship with Him as He feeds us with His life-giving Word as well as His self-giving in the Eucharist. Our relationship with Him is the foundation of our mission to bring His Easter message of love to others.

Question for reflection:

What is Jesus' invitation to me in this time of prayer?

**Saturday, 10th April, Saturday within Easter Octave.
Acts 4:13-21, Mark 16:9-15**

Having risen in the morning on the first day of the week, Jesus appeared first to Mary of Magdala from whom he had cast out seven devils. She then went to those who had been his companions, and who were mourning and in tears, and told them. But they did not believe her when they heard her say that he was alive and that she had seen him. After this, he showed himself under another form to two of them as they were on their way into the country. These went back and told the others, who did not believe them either. Lastly, he showed himself to the Eleven themselves while they were at table. He reproached them for their incredulity and obstinacy, because they had refused to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. And he said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation.'

Jesus trust us and so, He calls us for mission

Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdala. She went to His disciples but they did not believe her. Then, Jesus showed Himself to the two disciples of Emmaus. These two went back to the disciples, but they did not believe in them too. Lastly, Jesus Himself appeared to His doubting disciples and even reproached them for “*their incredulity and obstinacy*”. What did Jesus do next? The gospel stated that He entrusted to these disciples the mission to go out and continue His mission of proclaiming the Good News of God’s love.

We might find ourselves lukewarm in our faith. We might be struggling with doubts about God and His love. We might be going through the motions of our faith. Yet, Jesus continues to approach us in order to encounter us and renew His call for us to be His disciples. His faithful love never stops believing and trusting in us. Today, He tells us, “*Go and proclaim the Good News to all!*”

Questions for reflection:

Do I identify myself with the 11 disciples in today's gospel passage? Am I open to allow Jesus to transform me today?

**Sunday, 11th April, Divine Mercy Sunday.
Acts 4:32-35, 1 John 5:1-6, John 20:19-31**

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and, after saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. 'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone's sins, they are retained. Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, 'We have seen the Lord,' but he answered, 'Unless I can see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you,' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving any more but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. There were many other signs that Jesus worked in the sight of the disciples, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

Jesus always come to meet us

The disciples locked themselves in a room because they were terrified that the Jews would come looking for them and doing to them what they did to Jesus. In their fear, Jesus came and stood among them and offered the gift of His peace to them: *“Peace be with you”*. With the presence of the Risen Jesus with them, their fear turned into joy. Another disciple, Thomas, was filled with doubt rather than fear. He refused to believe that the others had seen Jesus because He believed in what He saw, i.e. Jesus died on the cross. Jesus did not give up on Thomas. He came to Thomas and renewed his faith.

We could identify ourselves with the disciples. The good news is that Jesus comes to meet us where we are. From our fears and doubts, He comes to encounter us again. His words to us today are: *“Peace be with you... do not be unbelieving anymore but believe!”*

Questions for reflection:

Are the doors of my heart locked? What is Jesus’ message to me in this time of prayer?

Monday, 12th April, 2nd week of Easter.

Acts 4:23-31, John 3:1-8

There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, who came to Jesus by night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher; for no one could perform the signs that you do unless God were with him.' Jesus answered: In all truth I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. Nicodemus said, 'How can anyone who is already old be born? Is it possible to go back into the womb again and be born?' Jesus replied: In all truth, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born through water and the Spirit; what is born of human nature is human; what is born of the

Spirit is spirit. Do not be surprised when I say: You must be born from above. The wind blows where it pleases; you can hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

To open ourselves to the Holy Spirit

Nicodemus was a Pharisee who was drawn towards the person of Jesus, His words and His actions. While the rest of His fellow Pharisees was working hard to find fault with Jesus, Nicodemus was trying to meet Him. In today's gospel, we see him going to Jesus at night because he was afraid that his peers would criticise him. Nicodemus took time to allow his attraction to Jesus to develop further into faith in Him. At the end of John's gospel, Nicodemus was no longer afraid of the Pharisees. It was he and Joseph of Arimathea who buried Jesus, thus, he was displaying to all his faith in Jesus. Like Nicodemus, Jesus constantly invites us to grow in our faith in Him and love for Him.

Yet, in this journey of drawing closer to Jesus, we need to be "*born through water and the Spirit*". We need the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit because we cannot grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus by depending on our own will-power and strength. May we count on the Spirit's help to blow us towards where Jesus is.

Question for reflection:

Am I willing to surrender myself to the movement of the Holy Spirit in my life?

**Tuesday, 13th April, 2nd week of Easter, St. Martin I.
Acts 4:32-37, John 3:7-15**

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

Do not be surprised when I say: You must be born from above. The wind blows where it pleases; you can hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with

everyone who is born of the Spirit. 'How is that possible?' asked Nicodemus. Jesus replied, 'You are the Teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things! In all truth I tell you, we speak only about what we know and witness only to what we have seen and yet you people reject our evidence. If you do not believe me when I speak to you about earthly things, how will you believe me when I speak to you about heavenly things? No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of man; as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.

Blown by the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God's love, which He has poured into hearts (Cf. Romans 5:5). We are invited to trust in the Spirit of Love because He is in our lives to help and guide us, never to harm us. Jesus, in today's gospel, compares the Holy Spirit to the wind. Like the wind, we cannot control the Holy Spirit, rather it is the Holy Spirit that blows us to where God desires for us to go.

Jesus is the first one who desires that we live a Spirit-filled life. In this time of prayer, let Nicodemus' question be ours to Jesus: *"How is that possible? How can I be born of the Spirit? How can I surrender and allow the Spirit to form me, guide me and direct me?"* Let us listen to Jesus as He speaks to us today.

Question for reflection:

"The wind blows where it pleases": Do I trust in the Holy Spirit and allow myself to be blown according to His movement?

Wednesday, 14th April, 2nd week of Easter.
Acts 5:17-26, John 3:16-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

'For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be judged; but whoever does not believe is judged already, because that person does not believe in the Name of God's only Son. And the judgement is this: though the light has come into the world people have preferred darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, to prevent his actions from being shown up; but whoever does the truth comes out into the light, so that what he is doing may plainly appear as done in God.'

God so loved the world so much

Today, as we read the gospel passage, let us not think that we "know" it so well and so we simply skim over it. Let us read it with an open heart and be amazed that we are the objects of His personal love. His love moves Him to action and to give us His only Son, Jesus. We are called to respond to this great gift by believing in Jesus and following Him who is the way to the Father.

Believing in the Son implies that we allow Jesus to shape the whole pattern of our life: from the way we speak to the hobbies we enjoy to the kind of relationship we have to the actions we do. Our lives must reflect the life of Jesus and His values of love and mercy. In this time of silent prayer, let us allow ourselves to be loved by God once again, and to have the joy to faithfully imitate Jesus.

Question for reflection:

Is Jesus the one shaping my life (my thoughts, words and actions)?

Thursday, 15th April, 2nd week of Easter.

Acts 5:27-33, John 3:31-36

John the Baptist said to his disciples: 'He who comes from above is above all others; he who is of the earth is earthly himself and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven bears witness to the things he has seen and heard, but his testimony is not accepted by anybody; though anyone who does accept his testimony is attesting that God is true, since he whom God has sent speaks God's own words, for God gives him the Spirit without reserve. The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything to his hands. Anyone who believes in the Son has eternal life, but anyone who refuses to believe in the Son will never see life: God's retribution hangs over him.'

Faith in Jesus brings us to eternal life

"Anyone who believes in the Son has eternal life...". Eternal life is the life of God. The good news is that the one who places his/her faith in Jesus *"has"* eternal life. This is because eternal life does not start after death, but this life of God in us begins here and now with the response of faith. Thus, we need to ask ourselves: Do we believe in Jesus, the one who has come to reveal God's love? If we truly believe, how do we respond to Him?

Believing in Jesus is not simply reciting the creed or fulfilling external obligations. True faith demands that we need to live it out in our daily life by allowing Jesus to impact and affect the way we relate to family and friends, to the entertainment and hobbies we enjoy, to the efforts we stand in solidarity with the poor and those suffering from injustice, etc. Let us start to actively live our faith so that we can begin to enjoy eternal life here and now.

Question for reflection:

What does it mean for me to have eternal life?

Friday, 16th April, 2nd week of Easter.

Acts 5:34-42, John 6:1-15

Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee -- or of Tiberias- and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he had done in curing the sick. Jesus climbed the hillside and sat down there with his disciples. The time of the Jewish Passover was near. Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, 'Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?' He said this only to put Philip to the test; he himself knew exactly what he was going to do. Philip answered, 'Two hundred denarii would not buy enough to give them a little piece each.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said 'Here is a small boy with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that among so many?' Jesus said to them, 'Make the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass there, and as many as five thousand men sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were sitting there; he then did the same with the fish, distributing as much as they wanted. When they had eaten enough he said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing is wasted.' So they picked them up and filled twelve large baskets with scraps leftover from the meal of five barley loaves. Seeing the sign that he had done, the people said, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.' Jesus, as he realised they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, fled back to the hills alone.

The little we offer bears fruit

The people were hungry. Philip felt helpless because he did not have the resources to help the crowd. Andrew saw that a boy had some food but he too was at loss with this impossible task of feeding the crowd with such insufficient resources. The small boy,

however, offered all that he had, his 5 barley loaves and 2 fish, because he somehow knew that Jesus could do something with his gift. Indeed, He did! Jesus took the small boy's offering, multiplied the loaves and fish and fed the people.

Today, we are invited to always be hopeful even though we see that what we have is nothing and that the problem we face overwhelms us. With trust in Jesus, we put our part, no matter how small, in doing something. With faith in Him, we offer our 5 loaves and 2 fish, our small efforts to help others and ourselves. We do, we work, we help because we know that Jesus can and will work wonders in and through our lives.

Questions for reflection:

Where do I place myself in this passage? Do I offer the little that I have?

Saturday, 17th April, 2nd week of Easter.
Acts 6:1-7, John 6:16-21

That evening the disciples went down to the shore of the sea and got into a boat to make for Capernaum on the other side of the sea. It was getting dark by now and Jesus had still not rejoined them. The wind was strong, and the sea was getting rough. They had rowed three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming towards the boat. They were afraid, but he said, 'It's me. Don't be afraid.' They were ready to take him into the boat, and immediately it reached the shore at the place they were making for.

It is Jesus! There is no need to fear

"It's me. Don't be afraid." Today, we desperately need to take these words of Jesus to heart, especially in those moments when we struggle against the strong wind of fear and uncertainty. We need to trust that the Risen Jesus is always with us in this journey

of life. May we always be ready to take Him into our boat, into our life.

Let us also not forget that many people are struggling with hardships of illness, unemployment, loss of a loved one, etc. As Christians, we can do our part to help them to recognise that Jesus comes to them in these trying and threatening moments and be open to His presence of love that is the source of comfort and peace. “*It’s me. Don’t be afraid*”: may these words be their mantra as well as ours that guides all of us through each day.

Question for reflection:

Do I take Jesus into my boat every day?

Sunday, 18th April, 3rd Sunday of Easter.

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19, 1 John 2:1-5, Luke 24:35-48

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread. They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts? See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet. Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, as they were dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes. Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, was destined to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in

his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

God is peace

As we enter into the third week of Easter, Jesus invites us to recognise His presence of love as He stands among us and gives us again His gift of peace. In the situations that we live, no matter how hopeless and challenging they are, we are called to look at the Risen Jesus who comes to reveal that His love is stronger than any difficulty, failure and even the power of death.

Offering us His peace, Jesus too sends us out to be men and women of peace who dare to speak out and renounce all forms of violence, exclusion and discrimination that destroy the reputation and disfigure the dignity of others. Jesus needs us to work for peace by healing wounds, building bridges and strengthening friendships. *"God is peace: let us ask him to help us to be peacemakers each day, in our life, in our families, in our cities and nations, in the whole world. Let us allow ourselves to be moved by God's goodness"* (Pope Francis, 25th Dec 2013) Today, let peace begin with us!

Question for reflection:

Am I open to receive Jesus' peace and also to take up the call to be His peacemaker today?

Monday, 19th April, 3rd week of Easter.

Acts 6:8-15, John 6:22-29

After Jesus had fed the five thousand, his disciples saw him walking on the water. Next day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side saw that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that the disciples had set off by themselves. Other boats, however, had put in from

Tiberias, near the place where the bread had been eaten. When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into those boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus. When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered: In all truth, I tell you, you are looking for me not because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat. Do not work for food that goes bad, but work for food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of man will give you, for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal. Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to carry out God's work?' Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is carrying out God's work: you must believe in the one he has sent.'

Jesus alone can satisfy

Why am I looking for Jesus? Today, the crowd went searching for Jesus but for the wrong reason. They went to Jesus because they wanted Him to provide them with more bread to eat and be satisfied. Jesus, however, wanted them to look for Him as the one who can give the bread that endures for eternal life, which is God's own life.

What about us? Are we looking for Jesus for the wrong reasons? Jesus always welcomes us when we go to Him, but He will challenge us to go beyond our physical needs and to be attentive to our inner deepest hunger in our hearts, the hunger for more trust, the hunger for unconditional love, the hunger for living life with meaning, the hunger for peace, the hunger for entering into a loving relationship with God. Jesus desires to satisfy the deepest hunger in us. Let us be in touch with our inner hunger and go to Jesus who alone can satisfy all that we truly need.

Question for reflection:

What is the inner hunger that I have?

Tuesday, 20th April, 3rd week of Easter.
Acts 7:51, 8:1, John 6:30-35

The people said to Jesus , 'What sign will you yourself do, the sight of which will make us believe in you? What work will you do? Our fathers ate manna in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' Jesus answered them: In all truth, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven, the true bread; for the bread of God is the bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. 'Sir,' they said, 'give us that bread always.' Jesus answered them: 'I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever hunger; no one who believes in me will ever thirst.'

Jesus, the bread of life, my food for the journey

"I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever hunger...": Jesus identifies Himself as the bread of life, the presence of God who can truly nourish and satisfy our hunger.

Very often, we take Jesus and what He offers to us, i.e His life and His love, for granted. We look instead at what this world can offer to us in order to satisfy our hunger for love, strength, meaning and new life. Today and each day, Jesus invites us to come to Him, to believe in Him, to trust in Him. In the Eucharist, Jesus draws close to us and feeds us. In His word, He nourishes our faith and hope. Let us listen to Jesus as He presents Himself to us as the one who is our bread of life and to have the faith to recognise that He is truly all that we need. In this time of prayer, let us be grateful to Jesus for being the source of our strength as we journey through life.

Question for reflection:

What is preventing me from perceiving and experiencing Jesus as the bread of life?

**Wednesday, 21st April, 3rd week of Easter, St. Anselm.
Acts 8:1-8, John 6:35-40**

Jesus said to the crowd: "I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever hunger; no one who believes in me will ever thirst. But, as I have told you, you can see me and still you do not believe. Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me; I will certainly not reject anyone who comes to me, because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me. Now the will of him who sent me is that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me, but that I should raise it up on the last day. It is my Father's will that whoever sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and that I should raise that person up on the last day."

Jesus, the Bread of Life, does not reject but welcomes all

"I will certainly not reject anyone who comes to me, because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me.": This is the God that we worship and believe in. Jesus, the Love incarnated, has come to reveal the heart of God whose love is faithful. He will never reject anyone who comes to Him because He always desires to be in communion with all of us. His love never discriminates. Even though we might turn away from Him, God will never turn away from us. He always welcomes us with open arms and remains for us the Bread of Life.

What about us? Do we recognise the church, our faith community, our homes as places of the pure and righteous or places where saints and sinners are welcomed? The call today is for us to first let ourselves be embraced by God's faithful love. From this experience of being loved, we are called to present this faithful love of God to others by welcoming them into the church and our faith community and offering them the opportunity to encounter God who never rejects anyone.

Question for reflection:

How can I imitate God's inclusive love?

Thursday, 22nd April, 3rd week of Easter.

Acts 8:26-40, John 6:44-51

Jesus said to the crowd: 'No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God; everyone who has listened to the Father, and learnt from him, comes to me. Not that anybody has seen the Father, except him who has his being from God: he has seen the Father. In all truth I tell you, everyone who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert and they are dead; but this is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person may eat it and not die. I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

Jesus, the living bread

"I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world." Jesus, the Living Bread, gives His flesh for us. When we receive the Eucharist, we are eating the Body of Christ, His flesh. It is not a symbol or a figure of speech. As Catholics, we believe that the bread is truly His Body and the wine is truly His blood. And so, when the priest pronounces the words of the Consecration: *"Take this all of you and eat this, for this is my Body which will be given up for you"* and lifts the host, it is no longer the priest who is the one saying those words. It is the Risen Lord who is the one saying through the human instrument, the priest. Do we appreciate this amazing gift of the Eucharist or have we taken it for granted?

Today, in the Eucharist, Jesus remains with us today and forever. He accompanies us and gives Himself to be our living bread as food for this pilgrimage of life.

Question for reflection:

How can I, with my life, respond to this gift of the Eucharist?

Friday, 23rd April, 3rd week of Lent, St. George.

Acts 9:1-20, John 6: 52-59

The Jews started arguing among themselves, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' Jesus replied to them: "In all truth I tell you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise that person up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in that person. As the living Father sent me and I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will also draw life from me. This is the bread which has come down from heaven; it is not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live forever." This is what he taught at Capernaum in the synagogue.

Drawing life from Jesus

The Jews could not understand Jesus' teaching regarding Him giving His flesh to be eaten. Jesus, instead, of toning down His words, went on to insist on the need, not only to eat His flesh but to drink His blood too. Why does Jesus keep insisting on the need to eat His flesh and drink His blood? This is because those who eat His flesh will have life, God's life. As He said in the gospel, "...so whoever eats me will also draw life from me". The key question is: What does this mean for us today?

At mass, when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we enter into a deep and profound communion with Him and we draw life from Him. Jesus also comes to us and nourishes us with His Word that gives eternal life. He also comes to us and gives us life through the love of others in community. Thus, drawing life from the Risen Jesus in these many ways, we are sent to become channels of His life for the world and bringing His life to others.

Question for reflection:

Am I open to receive Jesus' life and share it with others?

Saturday, 24th April, 3rd week of Easter, St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen.

Acts 9:31-42, John 6:60-69

After hearing this doctrine, many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this disturb you? What if you should see the Son of man ascend to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. 'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset who did not believe and who was to betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me except by the gift of the Father.' After this, many of his disciples went away and accompanied him no more. Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.'

It is Jesus whom I am following

In today's gospel, we see many of Jesus' followers decided not to follow Jesus anymore because they could not tolerate His teaching. Jesus did not stop them from leaving but respected their

freedom to go away from Him. Jesus then looked at the Twelve and asked them, “*What about you, do you want to go away too?*” We pause here, and allow Jesus to ask us this same question: “*What about you? Do you want also to go away?*” He respectfully waits for our response.

Jesus invites us to follow Him, and this invitation demands a daily, conscious and personal decision from us. Today, there might be certain teachings that we struggle to accept or there might be scandals and injustices in the church that shake our faith. We might be tempted to simply walk away from all these challenges. The call is to put Jesus back in our discipleship and renew our decision to follow Him. It is Jesus that we follow and commit our lives to. Peter, upon hearing Jesus’ question, immediately replied, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life*”. May we make our own the words of Peter today!

Question for reflection:

“*Do you want to go away too?*”: What will be my response to Jesus’ question?

Sunday, 25th April, 4th Sunday of Easter, Good Shepherd Sunday.

Acts 4:8-12, 1 John 3:1-2, John 10: 11-18

Jesus said: ‘I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for my sheep. And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and I must lead these too. They too will listen to my voice, and

there will be only one flock, one shepherd. The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own free will, and as I have power to lay it down, so I have power to take it up again; and this is the command I have received from my Father.'

Jesus, my Good Shepherd

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. Unlike the hired man, He, as our shepherd, commits Himself to love us and cares for us because He knows His own and His own knows Him. There is a mutual bond of intimacy between Jesus and each one of us, which is compared to Jesus' own intimate love with God the Father. How is our relationship with Jesus our Shepherd? Do we believe that we are loved by our Shepherd? The constant invitation of Jesus is for us to enter into a loving relationship with Him, i.e. a love that trusts Him to lead us in all events of our life. It is to have a trust that truly believes and experiences the words of Psalm 23:4: "*Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me*".

"And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and I must lead these too": This is Jesus' desire. Today, let us be reminded that each of us, as a parent, religious, spouse, friend, can play a part in bringing others to listen to the voice of the Shepherd and experiencing themselves welcomed and loved.

Question for reflection:

How can I live my faith and trust in Jesus in such a way that my life is a witness for others to know and meet Him?

Monday, 26th April, 4th week of Easter.
Acts 11:1-18, John 10:1-10

Jesus said: 'In all truth I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate but climbs in some other way, is a thief

and a bandit. He who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out all those that are his, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him because they do not recognise the voice of strangers.' Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus spoke to them again: In all truth, I tell you, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All who have come before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: such a one will go in and out and will find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

One by one, the Shepherd calls

The call of Jesus is personal. In the gospel today, Jesus said: “*one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out*”. The voice of our Shepherd calls all of us to be His disciples and to follow Him. Within this general call, each of us has a particular call in which we personally follow Jesus depending on our concrete situations, our talents and strengths, our limitations and weaknesses. By following the voice of our Shepherd, we will always be led to have life and have it to the full. This life that Jesus talks about is not something that we will achieve after death, but it is a present reality where we enter into oneness with God and share in His life of love and communion. Thus, we walk after Him with trust.

In walking the path of following Jesus as a parent, a friend, a religious, a spouse, an aunt/uncle, Jesus entrusts someone or some people to be under our charge and our responsibility. In one way or another, we become shepherds to others. Walking with Jesus, we lead them by example to the green pasture of God's life. May Jesus count on us to be shepherds to the people in our lives today!

Question to reflect:

What is Jesus' call for me at this point of my life?

Tuesday, 27th April, 4th week of Easter.

Acts 11:19-26, John 10: 22-30

It was the time of the feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the Temple walking up and down in the Portico of Solomon. The Jews gathered round him and said, 'How much longer are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us openly.' Jesus replied: 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name are my witness; but you do not believe, because you are no sheep of mine. The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from my hand. The Father, for what he has given me, is greater than anyone, and no one can steal anything from the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.'

In the heart of the Shepherd

"The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.": Today, Jesus reminds us once again that we need to listen to His voice among the many other voices that tend to vie for our attention. We need to listen to Him in the silence of our hearts, in others, and most of all, in the Scriptures. We listen in order to follow Him. The good news is that Jesus is the first one who is always faithful to us. He, as our Shepherd, will never allow any of us to be lost, stolen or fall away from Him. Even if we consciously walk away from Him, He will never abandon us but waits for us to come back to Him because His love for us has no end.

Following the Shepherd, we are loved and protected. Each day, He wants to lead us to eternal life, to share God's life of love and communion. Let us keep listening to the voice of the Shepherd, the voice of Love, and abide in His love.

Question for reflection:

What is Jesus' message for me as I pray with the gospel passage today?

Wednesday, 28th April, 4th week of Easter, St. Peter Chanel, St. Louis M. Grignion de Montfort.

Acts 12:23-13:5a, John 12:44-50

Jesus declared publicly: 'Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in the one who sent me, and whoever sees me, sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as light, to prevent anyone who believes in me from staying in the dark anymore. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them faithfully, it is not I who shall judge such a person, since I have come not to judge the world, but to save the world: anyone who rejects me and refuses my words has his judge already: the word itself that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day. For I have not spoken of my own accord; but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and what to speak, and I know that his commands mean eternal life. And therefore what the Father has told me is what I speak.'

Jesus, the Light of Love that shines

These are the last words of Jesus in His public ministry which summarise His whole life and mission on earth. He spoke of God as His Father, and who was the one who sent Him to the world to be the Light for humankind. Jesus, on another occasion, also identified Himself as Light: "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" (John 8:12). He is the Light but we have the freedom to choose to

be in the Light or to stay in darkness. Those who choose to walk in His Light can perceive life with faith and live each day with the security in the Father's love.

Today, we are invited to embrace Jesus to be our Light. With Jesus as our Light of truth, He opens our eyes to see the reality about God, about ourselves, about others. As our Light of love, He guides us as we travel through life with a sense of security and comfort. As our Light of life, He dispels the shadowy areas of fear and sin in us. In this time of prayer, let our one desire be that we allow Jesus to be our Light and for us to live in that Light.

Question for reflection:

What does it mean for me to have Jesus as my Light?

**Thursday, 29th April, 4th week of Easter, St. Catherine of Siena.
Acts 13:13-25, John 13:16-20**

After he had washed the feet of his disciples, Jesus said to them: 'In all truth, I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly. I am not speaking about all of you: I know the ones I have chosen, but what scripture says must be fulfilled: 'He who shares my table takes advantage of me. I tell you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe that I am He. In all truth, I tell you, whoever welcomes the one I send, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me.'

Whoever welcomes you, welcomes me

"In all truth, I tell you, whoever welcomes the one I send, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me": Let us pause a moment and allow these words of Jesus to sink into our hearts. Today, Jesus sends us out to be His presence of

love in the world! Jesus identifies Himself with each one of us, and thus, the one who welcomes us welcomes Him.

Jesus trusts us so much that He calls us, with our strengths and limitations, to this mission. Through our words and actions, Jesus wants to encounter each person that crosses our paths today. Can Jesus count on us to be His presence?

Question for reflection:

How can I consciously bring Jesus' presence to others today?

**Friday, 30th April, 4th week of Easter, St. Pius V.
Acts 13:26-33, John 14:1-6**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you to myself, so that you may be with me where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: 'I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'

The joy of trusting in God

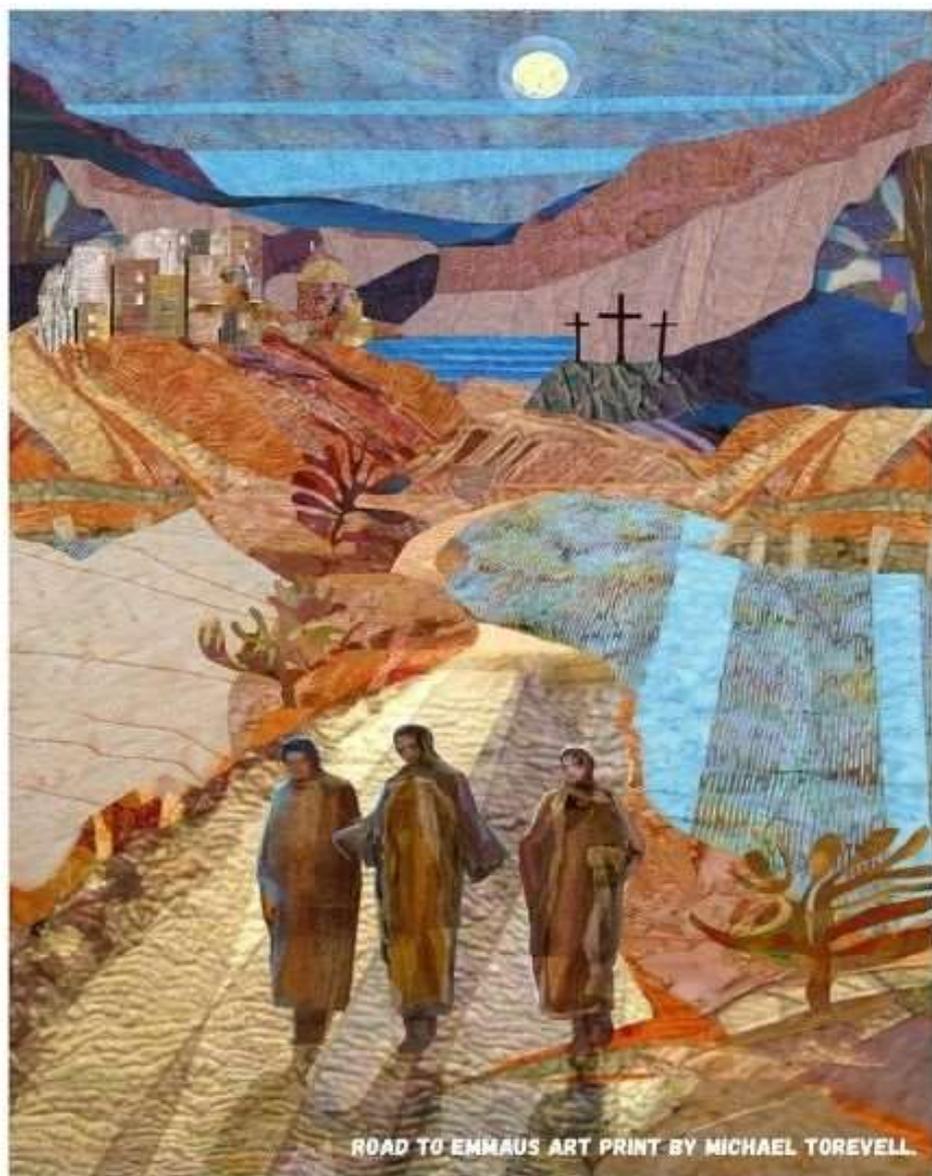
In today's gospel, Jesus knew that His disciples were afraid of what was to come. He told them, "*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me*". These words are also meant for us to listen and believe in. We often encounter moments of uncertainty and situations that cause us to fear. The call for us is to trust in God and to have this inner peace that we are not alone. We are invited to trust in God who will never abandon us but whose heart is open to welcome us always to experience communion and love. Jesus paints a picture of God's heart as a

house with many rooms where nobody is rejected but all have a place as His sons and daughters.

We need to be aware that we do not need to wait for life after death to be in God's house. Here and now, we are invited to already stay in the house of the Father, and in the life to come, we will be there with God forever. As we go through life with its troubles, may we find comfort in Jesus' words today as we know that we are in God's heart. There, we find peace to walk on.

Question to reflect:

Do I place my trust in God when I live through difficult circumstances?



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verbum dei