

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Table of Contents

April 1, 2024.....	3
April 2, 2024.....	8
April 3, 2024.....	13
April 4, 2024.....	20
April 5, 2024.....	26
April 6, 2024.....	32
April 7, 2024.....	37
April 8, 2024.....	43
April 9, 2024.....	50
April 10, 2024.....	55
April 11, 2024.....	59
April 12, 2024.....	64
April 13, 2024.....	69
April 14, 2024.....	74
April 15, 2024.....	80
April 16, 2024.....	85
April 17, 2024.....	91
April 18, 2024.....	96
April 19, 2024.....	102
April 20, 2024.....	109
April 21, 2024.....	115
April 22, 2024.....	120
April 23, 2024.....	127
April 24, 2024.....	132
April 25, 2024.....	137
April 26, 2024.....	142
April 27, 2024.....	147
April 28, 2024.....	153
April 29, 2024.....	157
April 30, 2024.....	162



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 1, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Monday, April 1st, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 2:14, 22-32

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed them in a loud voice: 'Men of Judaea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, make no mistake about this, but listen carefully to what I say.

22 'Men of Israel, listen to what I am going to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you know.

23 This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified and killed by men outside the Law.

24 But God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since,

25 as David says of him: I kept the Lord before my sight always, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me.

26 So my heart rejoiced my tongue delighted; my body, too, will rest secure,

27 for you will not abandon me to Hades or allow your holy one to see corruption.

28 You have taught me the way of life, you will fill me with joy in your presence.

29 'Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us.

30 But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne,

31 he spoke with foreknowledge about the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not see corruption.

32 God raised this man Jesus to life, and of that we are all witnesses.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

1 [In a quiet voice Of David] Protect me, O God, in you is my refuge.

2 To Yahweh I say, 'You are my Lord, my happiness is in none

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

5 My birthright, my cup is Yahweh; you, you alone, hold my lot secure.

7 I bless Yahweh who is my counsellor, even at night my heart instructs me.

8 I keep Yahweh before me always, for with him at my right hand, nothing can shake me.

9 So my heart rejoices, my soul delights, my body too will rest secure,

10 for you will not abandon me to Sheol, you cannot allow your faithful servant to see the abyss.

11 You will teach me the path of life, unbounded joy in your presence, at your right hand delight for ever.

Gospel, Matthew 28:8-15

8 Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples.

9 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.

10 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.'

11 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.

12 These held a meeting with the elders and, after some discussion, handed a considerable sum of money to the soldiers

13 with these instructions, 'This is what you must say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep."

14 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.'

15 So they took the money and carried out their instructions, and to this day that is the story among the Jews.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 1, 2024

1. As we follow Peter and John, whose story we heard proclaimed in our Gospel lesson for this Easter Sunday, we witness the power of the Resurrection at work in the lives of ordinary men and women who become extraordinary by living their lives in Him. No longer afraid, these witnesses of the Resurrection, in the words of the Acts of the Apostles, "turn the world upside down with their preaching." They became so configured to the Lord that they lived and died like Him, for the sake of the world, which is being re-born now, because he has been raised. So, can we!

Peter's powerful sermon, a portion of which was our first reading at Today's Holy Mass, is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. It follows the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. That same power is available to all who follow the Risen Jesus Christ. That includes you and me.

Do you believe this? If not, ask the Holy Spirit to work in your life and watch what happens. Jesus is not dead, He is Alive!

2. The Psalmist sings in our response on this Easter Day in the Octave, "My heart rejoices, my soul delights, my body too will rest secure"

Christian joy is a fruit of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer (Galatians 5:22). It is meant to be reflected in a new way of living. It also reveals the character of Christ being formed in a believer. It does not mean smiling all the time - though for many of us a bit more smiling would be a good idea.

Rather, Christian joy, Gospel Joy, means living as though we know that Jesus never leaves us. He meant it when he said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Mt. 28:20)

A lifestyle change should become the fruit of our Christian confession and demonstrate for the world what it means to be a Christian. It is why, before they were called Christians, they were referred to as "the Way" (Acts 22:4). By living our lives in the Lord, we can find this Joy that He promised. But only by living in Him. We do that by living in the heart of the Church, His Body, for the sake of the world. The Church is fundamentally a relational reality, a communion.

3. Our Gospel for this Octave of Easter is taken from St. Matthew's account of the women who encountered the Risen Jesus! They became witnesses to the Resurrection!
So are we!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The eight days, beginning with Easter Sunday, is called the Octave. We will feast on the readings which Holy Mother Church sets out in every Holy Mass. We will hear the marvelous post Resurrection accounts and follow the extraordinary change which occurred in the early Apostles as the power of this Resurrection fashioned them into a living witness for the faith.

We will be invited to celebrate Easter for fifty days until we celebrate the next great Feast, the Feast of Pentecost. Alleluias will permeate our worship - and are meant to inform our lives. That is because, in the words of the great western Church Bishop, Augustine, "we are an Easter people and alleluia is our song."

Everything is different now because that Tomb is empty. We have been capacitated, through the Resurrection, to begin living our lives in a new way. Do we experience this?

If not, ask the Risen Lord to show you His power and fill you with a greater measure of the Holy Spirit.

Watch what happens!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 2, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 2nd, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 2:36-41

36 'For this reason the whole House of Israel can be certain that the Lord and Christ whom God has made is this Jesus whom you crucified.'

37 Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'What are we to do, brothers?'

38 'You must repent,' Peter answered, 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

39 The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God is calling to himself.'

40 He spoke to them for a long time using many other arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.'

41 They accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

4 The word of Yahweh is straightforward, all he does springs from his constancy.

5 He loves uprightness and justice; the faithful love of Yahweh fills the earth.

18 But see how Yahweh watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his faithful love,

19 to rescue them from death and keep them alive in famine.

20 We are waiting for Yahweh; he is our help and our shield,

22 Yahweh, let your faithful love rest on us, as our hope has rested in you.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 20:11-18

11 But Mary was standing outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, as she wept, she stooped to look inside,

12 and saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet.

13 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.'

14 As she said this she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not realise that it was Jesus.

15 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.'

16 Jesus said, 'Mary!' She turned round then and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbuni!' -- which means Master.

17 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.'

18 So Mary of Magdala told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and that he had said these things to her.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 2, 2024

1. With the Mass of Easter day, we begin the Octave, eight days of feasting on the readings which Holy Mother Church sets out on the table of the Ambo and receiving the Risen One in the most Holy Eucharist, becoming what we consume. We will hear the marvelous post Resurrection accounts and follow the extraordinary change which occurred in the early Apostles as the power of this Resurrection fashioned them into a living witness for the faith.

We will celebrate Easter for fifty days until we celebrate the next great Feast, the Feast of Pentecost. Alleluias will permeate our worship - and they are meant to inform our lives. That is because, in the words of the great western Church Bishop, Augustine, "we are an Easter people and alleluia is our song."

In our first reading, it is obvious that the Apostle Peter is different now as well. We have a portion of his powerful sermon, preached after he experiences the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. His words changed the hearts of the listeners. In fact, on that day, three thousand were Baptized. Have we experienced the power of the Risen Lord? The tomb is empty!

2. The Psalmist David is a man who had a constant prayer life and, as a result, experienced the presence of the Lord. We are reminded today that "the faithful love of Yahweh fills the earth." As we hear this Psalm, and so many others like it. As we respond by song or words, we should ask the Lord to fill our lives with His constant love and make us the kind of people who reveal his love to others.

Lord, "let your faithful love rest on us, as our hope has rested in you" we pray with the Psalmist. And the Lord hears our prayer.

3. Because Jesus has been raised, everything is different now. Because He has been raised, heaven has come to earth and earth can now come to heaven.

Because He has been raised, the new creation has already begun. The seed of the kingdom is manifested in the Church which is His Risen Body, the sign of the new heaven and new earth. That Holy Place of Habitation where all men and women are called to be set free from the Law of sin and death, live and graze, being fed on His Word and nourished on His Body and Blood, healed by His Oil of Mercy and prepared for eternity.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Mary found an empty tomb. Yet, she did not, at first comprehend what had occurred. Even the assurance of Angels was not enough to open her eyes. So, the Risen Lord Himself appeared to her. And, He called her by name! In that encounter, she knew!

The readings for the Mass of Easter Monday focused me on the greatest gift of all, the living faith which comes from the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The tomb is empty. Death could not contain the One who poured Himself out in Love. It fills me with real Joy - the kind which comes from a living encounter with the Risen Jesus Christ. That encounter is the heart of the Christian faith.

The light which flows from that once dark cave now fills the entire world with hope. That includes my own personal world, the world within my heart, which has been filled with mourning the loss of my mother. Easter makes it all make sense and opens up the portal of hope.

The last enemy death has been defeated, hell has been conquered, the captives have been liberated, love has triumphed, and heavens gates have been opened wide. He is Alive and all those who stand at the Altar of the Cross, believing in His promise, shall live forever in Him.

There is a glorified Resurrected Savior, now seated at the right hand of the Father, holding the place He has prepared for each of us. His wounds are beautiful now, streaming the light of grace upon an earth being reborn, revealing the depth of His love and the Hope that springs eternal. Through taking on our very humanity, He did for us what we could never have done for ourselves. Alleluia!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 3, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 3rd, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 3:1-10

- 1 Once, when Peter and John were going up to the Temple for the prayers at the ninth hour,
- 2 it happened that there was a man being carried along. He was a cripple from birth; and they used to put him down every day near the Temple entrance called the Beautiful Gate so that he could beg from the people going in.
- 3 When this man saw Peter and John on their way into the Temple he begged from them.
- 4 Peter, and John too, looked straight at him and said, 'Look at us.'
- 5 He turned to them expectantly, hoping to get something from them,
- 6 but Peter said, 'I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk!'
- 7 Then he took him by the right hand and helped him to stand up. Instantly his feet and ankles became firm,
- 8 he jumped up, stood, and began to walk, and he went with them into the Temple, walking and jumping and praising God.
- 9 Everyone could see him walking and praising God,
- 10 and they recognised him as the man who used to sit begging at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. They were all astonished and perplexed at what had happened to him.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9

- 1 Alleluia! Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name, proclaim his deeds to the peoples!
- 2 Sing to him, make music for him, recount all his wonders!
- 3 Glory in his holy name, let the hearts that seek Yahweh rejoice!
- 4 Seek Yahweh and his strength, tirelessly seek his presence!

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

6 Stock of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob whom he chose!

7 He is Yahweh our God, his judgements touch the whole world.

8 He remembers his covenant for ever, the promise he laid down for a thousand generations,

9 which he concluded with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac.

Gospel, Luke 24:13-35

13 Now that very same day, two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem,

14 and they were talking together about all that had happened.

15 And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side;

16 but their eyes were prevented from recognising him.

17 He said to them, 'What are all these things that you are discussing as you walk along?' They stopped, their faces downcast.

18 Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.'

19 He asked, 'What things?' They answered, 'All about Jesus of Nazareth, who showed himself a prophet powerful in action and speech before God and the whole people;

20 and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified.

21 Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have now gone by since it all happened;

22 and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning,

23 and when they could not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

24 Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

25 Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe all that the prophets have said!

26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into his glory?'

27 Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

28 When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on;

29 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.

30 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.

31 And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight.

32 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?'

33 They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions,

34 who said to them, 'The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.'

35 Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 3, 2024

1. Jesus had promised his disciples that He would send them the Holy Spirit and that they would even do greater things than he did. In the Fourth Gospel, the Gospel of St John, we read these words: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father." (John 14:12)

In our first reading appointed for Holy Mass in this Octave of Easter, we see the fulfillment of that Promise. The healing power of Jesus Christ flowed through Peter and John. Peter said to the crippled beggar: 'I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, walk!'

And the man rose to his feet. He not only walked, but he began to leap and praise God. The power of the Risen Jesus continued on in the ministry of the Apostles. It still does. Jesus continues His ministry through His Body, the Church.

The Catholic Church has always proclaimed her belief in the existence of many different kinds of miracles. Our tradition and history are replete with examples of miracles. All miracles are due to the Risen Lord's continued ministry of Mercy in our midst. His redemptive work continues through the ministry of the Church which is His Body. All miracles are still signs of the Kingdom of God.

Do signs of the Kingdom continue to be manifested in our own day? The answer is YES! Do we believe this? Do we pray for miracles?

The tomb is empty.

2. Our Responsorial Psalm today is a song of praise. Not only does such praise please God, it elevates you and me when we practice it. David cries out:

"Alleluia! Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name, proclaim his deeds to the peoples!
Sing to him, make music for him, recount all his wonders!
Glory in his holy name, let the hearts that seek Yahweh rejoice!

Seek Yahweh and his strength, tirelessly seek his presence!"

During these days of Easter, praise should ring out throughout the Church. Praise needs to be cultivated and practiced. When it is, it naturally and supernaturally flows out of a believer. David is an example. Do we practice the prayer of praise?

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. In this excerpt from the Gospel of Luke, the Apostle recounts the story of the disciples walking along the road toward Emmaus, forlorn and perplexed over the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. (Luke 24:13-35) Jesus draws near to them on their journey - but they do not recognize Him. This failure to recognize Jesus is a common theme in many of the post-resurrection appearances recounted in the Scriptures.

The disciples continue their discussion of the events which had occurred during the days before, surprised that the stranger beside them seemed unaware of what had occurred. In His empathy and compassion, Jesus enters into their experience and listens attentively.

Then, he gives them the most profound expository sermon of all time. He explains the Hebrew Scriptures and shows these travelers how they all referred to the Christ, the Messiah. He also explains the events they were recounting to him on the road. However, even after the written word was broken open by the Living Word Incarnate, the disciples still did not recognize Jesus.

They invited their fellow traveler to stay with them, "stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over". Out of the depth of the love in His Sacred Heart, He consents. Then, we read these wonderful words:

"And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?"

"So, they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the Eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread."

From the earliest centuries of the Church Christians have understood this great encounter on the road points to the Holy Eucharist, the great Sacrament of Love, wherein Jesus Christ gives Himself completely to us, body, blood, soul and divinity. This is the Sacrament we call "Holy Communion" precisely because it brings us into communion with the Lord and, in Him, with one another, for the sake of the world.

Of course, in light of all of that, the account of this encounter on the way to Emmaus opens up, for all who reflect on it prayerfully, as a story which is still being written - by the Holy Spirit. In the encounter with the Lord in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were finally opened. So, it is meant to be with each one of us.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The Holy Eucharist is more than a commemoration; it is an invitation into ongoing communion with the Living God because Jesus Christ is Risen from the dead and walks with us on the road of our daily life. In this encounter, the whole world can begin to look different, if we let God's grace change us. Our life is meant to be a process of growing closer and closer to the Lord, a call to communion.

We make progress on the way when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us, giving us what we need to continually encounter the Lord, and work through us in the lives of others.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 4, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Thursday, April 4th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 3:11-26

11 Everyone came running towards them in great excitement, to the Portico of Solomon, as it is called, where the man was still clinging to Peter and John.

12 When Peter saw the people he addressed them, 'Men of Israel, why are you so surprised at this? Why are you staring at us as though we had made this man walk by our own power or holiness?

13 It is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified his servant Jesus whom you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate after he had given his verdict to release him.

14 It was you who accused the Holy and Upright One, you who demanded that a murderer should be released to you

15 while you killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are witnesses;

16 and it is the name of Jesus which, through faith in him, has brought back the strength of this man whom you see here and who is well known to you. It is faith in him that has restored this man to health, as you can all see.

17 'Now I know, brothers, that neither you nor your leaders had any idea what you were really doing;

18 but this was the way God carried out what he had foretold, when he said through all his prophets that his Christ would suffer.

19 Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,

20 and so that the Lord may send the time of comfort. Then he will send you the Christ he has predestined, that is Jesus,

21 whom heaven must keep till the universal restoration comes which God proclaimed, speaking through his holy prophets.

22 Moses, for example, said, "From among your brothers the Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me; you will listen to whatever he tells you.

23 Anyone who refuses to listen to that prophet shall be cut off from the people."



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

24 In fact, all the prophets that have ever spoken, from Samuel onwards, have predicted these days.

25 'You are the heirs of the prophets, the heirs of the covenant God made with your ancestors when he told Abraham, "All the nations of the earth will be blessed in your descendants".

26 It was for you in the first place that God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you as every one of you turns from his wicked ways.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 8:2, 5, 6-7, 8-9

2 even through the mouths of children, or of babes in arms, you make him a fortress, firm against your foes, to subdue the enemy and the rebel.

5 Yet you have made him little less than a god, you have crowned him with glory and beauty,

6 made him lord of the works of your hands, put all things under his feet,

7 sheep and cattle, all of them, and even the wild beasts,

8 birds in the sky, fish in the sea, when he makes his way across the ocean.

9 Yahweh our Lord, how majestic your name throughout the world!

Gospel, Luke 24:35-48

35 Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

36 They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!'

37 In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost.

38 But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts?'

39 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.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

40 And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet.

41 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?'

42 And they offered him a piece of grilled fish,

43 which he took and ate before their eyes.

44 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.'

45 He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures,

46 and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,

47 and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

48 You are witnesses to this.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 4, 2024

1. As we continue to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ during the Octave of Easter, all of our readings demonstrate the power of the Resurrection. Jesus is ALIVE. And He continues His Redemptive Mission through His Mystical Body, the Church, of which all the Baptized are members.

He had promised His disciples, they would do the works that He did, and even greater. And, in our first reading we see that promise being fulfilled Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour to pray. They find a lame beggar lying at the gate of the temple, the gate called Beautiful. Peter, speaking now with apostolic authority tells the man "Look at us." "Silver and gold, have I none, but what I have I give to you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

The signs of the kingdom continue, because it is Jesus who is still performing them, through His Apostles, to whom He has entrusted His ongoing work.

The beggar was overjoyed and began to leap for joy, praising God. The people ran into the portico of Solomon and Peter preached this powerful sermon. Once again, preaching the "Kerygma", a Greek word which refers to the essential elements of the Gospel which must be proclaimed to lead those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior to Him.

It is that "kerygma" which must, ONCE AGAIN, be preached in this urgent hour. When and where it is, the signs of the Kingdom, the miracles, will still occur. The greatest of which is the conversion of souls.

2. In the Responsorial Psalm this Easter Octave day, David sings of Divine Majesty and Human dignity. As beautiful as creation is, men and women are even more beautiful. They are the crown of creation. They, we, were created in the Image and likeness of God. That Image and likeness is restored through the Paschal mystery we are commemorating, the Saving Incarnation, Life, Suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Do we believe this? Do we live it?
3. Perhaps my favorite Easter Octave reading is the one recorded in Luke's Gospel. We have been hearing or reading of this encounter yesterday and today in the Gospel of St Luke Chapter 24. The Apostle recounts the disciples walking toward Emmaus, forlorn and perplexed over what had occurred to the Lord. Jesus draws near to them on their journey, but they do not recognize Him. This is a common theme in many of the post-resurrection appearances recounted in the Scriptures.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The disciples continue their discussion of the events which had occurred during the days before surprised that the stranger beside them seemed unaware of what had occurred. In His empathy and compassion, Jesus enters into their experience and listens.

Then, he gives them the most profound expository sermon (or homily as Catholics call it) of all time. He explains the Scriptures and shows these travelers how they all referred to the Christ. He explains the very events they were recounting to him on the road. However, even after the word was broken open by the Living Word Incarnate, the disciples still did not recognize Jesus.

They invited their fellow traveler to stay with them, "stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over. "Out of the depth of the love in His Sacred Heart, He agrees. Then, we read these wonderful words:

And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?"

So, they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the Eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

From the earliest centuries Christians have understood this great encounter on the road as referring to the Holy Eucharist, the great Sacrament of Love, wherein Jesus Christ gives Himself completely to us, body, blood, soul and divinity. This is the Sacrament we call "Holy Communion" because it brings us into communion with the Lord and, in Him with one another.

Of course, in light of that, this wonderful encounter on the way to Emmaus opens up in beauty for all who reflect on it prayerfully during this Easter season.

In the light of the encounter with the Lord in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were opened. So, it is meant to be with each one of us. The Holy Eucharist is more than a commemoration; it is an invitation into communion with the Living God - right now because Jesus Christ is Risen from the dead and walks with us on the road of life.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 5, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Friday, April 5th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 4:1-12

1 While they were still talking to the people the priests came up to them, accompanied by the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees.

2 They were extremely annoyed at their teaching the people the resurrection from the dead by proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus.

3 They arrested them, and, as it was already late, they kept them in prison till the next day.

4 But many of those who had listened to their message became believers; the total number of men had now risen to something like five thousand.

5 It happened that the next day the rulers, elders and scribes held a meeting in Jerusalem

6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, Jonathan, Alexander and all the members of the high-priestly families.

7 They made the prisoners stand in the middle and began to interrogate them, 'By what power, and by whose name have you men done this?'

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, addressed them, 'Rulers of the people, and elders!

9 If you are questioning us today about an act of kindness to a cripple and asking us how he was healed,

10 you must know, all of you, and the whole people of Israel, that it is by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, and God raised from the dead, by this name and by no other that this man stands before you cured.

11 This is the stone which you, the builders, rejected but which has become the cornerstone. Only in him is there salvation;

12 for of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 118:1-2, 4, 22-24, 25-27

1 Alleluia! Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good, for his faithful love endures for ever.

2 Let the House of Israel say, 'His faithful love endures for ever.'

4 Let those who fear Yahweh say, 'His faithful love endures for ever.'

22 The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;

23 This is Yahweh's doing, and we marvel at it.

24 This is the day which Yahweh has made, a day for us to rejoice and be glad.

25 We beg you, Yahweh, save us, we beg you, Yahweh, give us victory!

26 Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming! We bless you from the house of Yahweh.

27 Yahweh is God, he gives us light. Link your processions, branches in hand, up to the horns of the altar.

Gospel, John 21:1-14

1 Later on, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this:

2 Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together.

3 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.

4 When it was already light, there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus.

5 Jesus called out, 'Haven't you caught anything, friends?' And when they answered, 'No,'

6 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

7 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.

8 The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net with the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land.

9 As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it.

10 Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.'

11 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.

12 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.

13 Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish.

14 This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 5, 2024

1. Notice how Peter has changed. Notice the holy boldness and courage which replaced the fear that once led to denial of Jesus! What happened? The Holy Spirit is what happened. Jesus had instructed them to wait in Jerusalem and He would send another advocate. In fact, He did as He promised, and these Apostles were no longer afraid of those who would persecute them. Here, they are thrown into Jail, but they keep on preaching the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"They made the prisoners stand in the middle and began to interrogate them, 'By what power, and by whose name have you men done this?'

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, addressed them, 'Rulers of the people, and elders! If you are questioning us today about an act of kindness to a cripple and asking us how he was healed, you must know, all of you, and the whole people of Israel, that it is by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, and God raised from the dead, by this name and by no other that this man stands before you cured.

This is the stone which you, the builders, rejected but which has become the cornerstone. Only in him is there salvation; for of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved."

We are living in an age which is increasingly hostile to the Gospel. Are we willing to be His witnesses? The same Holy Spirit has been given to us. The stone that was rejected is Jesus Christ. He is the Cornerstone of His Church and we stand firm in Him. Will we let Him continue His mission through us?

2. David the Psalmist prophetically proclaims the very words which Peter quoted in the powerful sermon which he preached in the first reading of this Holy Mass.

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
This is Yahweh's doing, and we marvel at it.
This is the day which Yahweh has made, a day for us to rejoice and be glad."

Peter knew this Psalm. As a Jewish child, he had it committed to memory. He also understood that every promise given in the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures, was fulfilled and perfected in Jesus Christ.

Do we believe this? If so, how are we living the faith which we profess?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. St. John presents one of the multiple post Resurrection appearances of Jesus to the Apostles in the Gospel appointed for this Holy Mass during the Octave of Easter. This story of the miraculous catch of fish is reminiscent of the account Luke presents (Luke 5:1-11) where Jesus tells Peter He will make him a fisher of men.

Peter went back to his daily life. He was a fisherman. It was right there, in the stuff of daily life, that he encounters the Risen Jesus Christ.

Notice how John and Peter respond to the Lord. John is the "disciple whom Jesus loved". Both John and Peter, upon witnessing the miracle of multiplication, proclaimed "It is the Lord". And Peter took it a step further, literally. He jumped into the water!

The Fathers of the Church saw in the Image of the Boat, the Church. Her net will always be full and will not tear, if her members continue the work of evangelization and sanctification. The sea is the world which is waiting for the message of the Gospel. And, the special role entrusted to Peter is made present in the Church in the office which bears his name.

And, Jesus breaks bread with his disciples.

Immediately following this miracle, Jesus then entrusts Peter with a special role of leadership.

Do we look at our own daily experiences with the eyes of living faith? Do we look for Jesus in the stuff of our daily life? He is right there, because the tomb is empty.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 6, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Saturday, April 6th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 4:13-21

13 They were astonished at the fearlessness shown by Peter and John, considering that they were uneducated laymen; and they recognised them as associates of Jesus;

14 but when they saw the man who had been cured standing by their side, they could find no answer.

15 So they ordered them to stand outside while the Sanhedrin had a private discussion.

16 'What are we going to do with these men?' they asked. 'It is obvious to everybody in Jerusalem that a notable miracle has been worked through them, and we cannot deny it.

17 But to stop the whole thing spreading any further among the people, let us threaten them against ever speaking to anyone in this name again.'

18 So they called them in and gave them a warning on no account to make statements or to teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John retorted, 'You must judge whether in God's eyes it is right to listen to you and not to God.

20 We cannot stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.'

21 The court repeated the threats and then released them; they could not think of any way to punish them, since all the people were giving glory to God for what had happened.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 118:1, 14-15, 16-18, 19-21

1 Alleluia! Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good, for his faithful love endures for ever.

14 Yahweh is my strength and my song, he has been my Saviour.

15 Shouts of joy and salvation, in the tents of the upright, 'Yahweh's right hand is triumphant,

16 Yahweh's right hand is victorious, Yahweh's right hand is triumphant!'

17 I shall not die, I shall live to recount the great deeds of Yahweh.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

18 Though Yahweh punished me sternly, he has not abandoned me to death.

19 Open for me the gates of saving justice, I shall go in and thank Yahweh.

20 This is the gate of Yahweh, where the upright go in.

21 I thank you for hearing me, and making yourself my Saviour.

Gospel, Mark 16:9-15

9 Having risen in the morning on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary of Magdala from whom he had cast out seven devils.

10 She then went to those who had been his companions, and who were mourning and in tears, and told them.

11 But they did not believe her when they heard her say that he was alive and that she had seen him.

12 After this, he showed himself under another form to two of them as they were on their way into the country.

13 These went back and told the others, who did not believe them either.

14 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.

15 And he said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 6, 2024

1. In our first reading on this Saturday within the Octave of Easter, we see Peter and John appearing before a hostile Sanhedrin. Yet, they were without fear. They had a holy boldness. The Sanhedrin acknowledged the power the apostles demonstrated, including the working of miracles, in the name of Jesus!

The threats of the Court did not frighten Peter and John. In fact, they uttered words which have been repeated by many Christians over two millennia when they face hostility and are asked to bend the knee before hostile rulers and compromise their faith. Hear these words:

'You must judge whether in God's eyes it is right to listen to you and not to God.
We cannot stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.'

Many of the Nations in which we live are losing any moral compass and rushing headfirst into a new form of slavery. Sadly, some in leadership are smiling in the descent, actually thinking they are being liberated. This assessment is not meant to be alarmist or mean-spirited. It is simply an objective acknowledgement of where we stand. The real question now becomes, how shall we respond?

As Christians, we must become the Way to freedom for those who are rushing into the shackles of their own making by rejecting the truth. We must recognize the demands of the hour in which we live, steel ourselves by prayer and preparation, and offer ourselves to the Lord for His continuing redemptive mission.

How do we respond when we are persecuted or face hostility for following Jesus Christ? Are we exhibiting the kind of "holy boldness" demonstrated by Peter and John?

2. One of the ways we can grow in this kind of holy boldness is by practicing a lifestyle of praise. the Psalmist David shows us the way in so many of his Psalms. Remember, David faced Goliath down, with only five smooth stones... and he slew the giant, inspiring his brethren to heroism. How did he do it? He was most certainly a man who, in his own life, had made wrong choices, sinned greatly and repented often. But he was a man after Gods own heart!

He did it by cultivating a lifestyle of prayer. As we face the "Goliaths" of our own age, the Lord is looking for men and women of holy boldness, upon whom he can count, and through whom He can work, inspiring His people to heroism in this hour. Will we be numbered among them?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, still in the Octave of Easter, the Risen Jesus continues to appear to His disciples. Yet, many still do not believe! In this last chapter of the Gospel of St. Mark, just before He ascends to the Father, Jesus sends His disciples into the whole world to proclaim the Gospel to all creation!

That is our commission as well. Often called the "Great Commission", it is binding on every baptized Christian. Too often, it is not taken seriously and becomes a "Great Omission." We must cultivate a missionary spirit among us.

Only the Church can carry out the needed evangelical work the contemporary age needs. She is the Body of the Risen Christ, called to carry on His redemptive mission and continue His presence on this earth as a universal sign and sacrament. She is the missionary agent and - in the words of the fathers of the second Vatican Council - the seed and beginning of the kingdom of God.

Do we see ourselves as missionaries? We are!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 7, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Sunday, April 7th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 4:32-35

32 The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, as everything they owned was held in common.

33 The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all accorded great respect.

34 None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from the sale of them,

35 to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any who might be in need.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

2 Let the House of Israel say, 'His faithful love endures for ever.'

3 Let the House of Aaron say, 'His faithful love endures for ever.'

4 Let those who fear Yahweh say, 'His faithful love endures for ever.'

13 I was pushed hard, to make me fall, but Yahweh came to my help.

14 Yahweh is my strength and my song, he has been my Saviour.

15 Shouts of joy and salvation, in the tents of the upright, 'Yahweh's right hand is triumphant,

22 The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;

23 This is Yahweh's doing, and we marvel at it.

24 This is the day which Yahweh has made, a day for us to rejoice and be glad.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Reading 2, First John 5:1-6

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and whoever loves the father loves the son.

2 In this way we know that we love God's children, when we love God and keep his commandments.

3 This is what the love of God is: keeping his commandments. Nor are his commandments burdensome,

4 because every child of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith.

5 Who can overcome the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 He it is who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with water alone but with water and blood, and it is the Spirit that bears witness, for the Spirit is Truth.

Gospel, John 20:19-31

19 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,'

20 and, after saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord,

21 and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. 'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.'

22 After saying this he breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone's sins, they are retained.

24 Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 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.'

26 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

27 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.'

28 Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!'

29 Jesus said to him: You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

30 There were many other signs that Jesus worked in the sight of the disciples, but they are not recorded in this book.

31 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 7, 2024

1. In our first reading for this Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday, we hear of the Way of Life which the earliest Christians followed. They were united in both heart and soul and shared what they had with one another. They listened regularly to the instruction and teaching of the Apostles, the first Bishops, they prayed constantly and celebrated the Eucharist, the breaking of the Bread. And they evangelized. As a result of both their words and their witness, the Lord added to their number daily, those who "were being saved". Meaning those who repented of their sins, accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and were baptized.

The is "Way", and remember the early Christians were first called "The Way", commends itself to us today. We live in a kind of "New Rome" where men and women have turned away from the Lord. We are called to live differently in their midst so that they can "be saved", and come into a full relationship with the Lord, entering into full communion with His Church. His Mystical Body. How are we doing?

2. In our second reading, taken from the fifth chapter of the Beloved disciple John, written to all the early churches, we are reminded in another place in that beautiful letter that God is Love and, those who live in love live in God, and God in them. When we love the Lord, and put Him first in our lives, we overcome what St John calls "the world". In this context, he is not referring to the created order, which is good. Rather, "the world" is that system which has squeezed the Creator out, rejected His ways, and is worshipping false gods.

Where are we living? In and with the Lord, in His mystical Body, the Church, which is a seed of the kingdom to come? Or, in "the world". Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways in which "the world" is leading us away from the Lord. In this Easter season, the grace is available to leave the world and find our real home in the Lord.

3. Our Gospel text for this Second Sunday of Easter is from the Gospel of St. John. The Risen Jesus appears to the disciples and says, "Peace be with you". He breathes on them the Holy Spirit and gives them the power to forgive sins and continue His Redemptive mission. Thomas was not with them.

When he hears of this encounter, he does not believe. Rather, he insists that he would have to see him and put his hands into His Holy Wounds.

Eight days later, Jesus accommodates that request and appears again, inviting Thomas to do just that. WOW!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

This encounter led to Thomas being called Doubting Thomas by some. Yet the tradition tells us that this so-called Doubting Thomas died a martyr for his faith. He became a messenger of Mercy to India, a missionary who shed his own blood for the Master whom he encountered on that day. His insistence on touching the Holy Wounds presented the Disciple John another opportunity to explain for all of us the implications of the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Thomas responds in his beautiful encounter with the Risen Lord - My Lord and My God! That response reveals the heart of prayer. It also speaks to the essence of faith. His proclamation is a call to adoration and a living communion with God. His response has become the exclamation for millions, me included, when faced with the Mystery of Mysteries, the Holy Eucharist at the elevation during every Mass.

I suggest that Thomas was not a doubter, rather he was a believer. And he is a model for all of us at every Eucharist which is always the Feast of Mercy. Pope St Gregory the Great who occupied the Chair of Peter between 590 and 604 preached a marvelous homily on this encounter between Thomas and the Risen Lord. In it he asked:

"What conclusion, dear brethren, do you come to? Surely it was not by chance that this chosen disciple, was missing in the first place? Or that on his return he heard, that hearing he doubted, that doubting he touched, and that touching he believed?"

It was by divine dispensation and not by chance that things so fell out. The Mercy of God worked wonderfully, for when that doubting disciple touched his master's wounded flesh, he cured the wound of our disbelief. So, this doubting disciple, who actually touched, became a witness to the reality of the resurrection."

We Are Instruments of Divine Mercy.

We are invited to become living witnesses in our own day to the reality of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are instruments of Divine Mercy. Thomas touched the wounded side of beloved Savior to heal the wounds of our own disbelief. This Sunday we join with Catholics throughout the whole world in celebrating the Feast of Divine Mercy.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 8, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Monday, April 8th, 2024

Reading 1, Isaiah 7:10-14

10 Yahweh spoke to Ahaz again and said:

11 Ask Yahweh your God for a sign, either in the depths of Sheol or in the heights above.

12 But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask. I will not put Yahweh to the test.'

13 He then said: Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying human patience that you should try my God's patience too?

14 The Lord will give you a sign in any case: It is this: the young woman is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 40:7-8, 8-9, 10, 11

7 then I said, 'Here I am, I am coming.' In the scroll of the book it is written of me,

8 my delight is to do your will; your law, my God, is deep in my heart.

9 I proclaimed the saving justice of Yahweh in the great assembly. See, I will not hold my tongue, as you well know.

10 I have not kept your saving justice locked in the depths of my heart, but have spoken of your constancy and saving help. I have made no secret of your faithful and steadfast love, in the great assembly.

11 You, Yahweh, have not withheld your tenderness from me; your faithful and steadfast love will always guard me.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Reading 2, Hebrews 10:4-10

4 Bulls' blood and goats' blood are incapable of taking away sins,

5 and that is why he said, on coming into the world: You wanted no sacrifice or cereal offering, but you gave me a body.

6 You took no pleasure in burnt offering or sacrifice for sin;

7 then I said, 'Here I am, I am coming,' in the scroll of the book it is written of me, to do your will, God.

8 He says first You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the cereal offerings, the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them;

9 and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to do your will. He is abolishing the first sort to establish the second.

10 And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ made once and for all.

Gospel, Luke 1:26-38

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,

27 to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour! The Lord is with you.'

29 She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean,

30 but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour.

31 Look! You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus.

32 He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David;

33 he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.'



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

34 Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?'

35 The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God.'

36 And I tell you this too: your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month,

37 for nothing is impossible to God.'

38 Mary said, 'You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said.' And the angel left her.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 8, 2024

1. March 25 is the date when the Solemnity of the Feast of the Annunciation is celebrated in the Liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church. The mystery and full meaning of Mary's cooperation in God's plan has inspired some of the most profound reflection in the Christian tradition. As well it should.

She freely chose to say YES. Our first reading at Mass today is taken from the messianic Prophet Isaiah places the event within the fulfillment of God's plan and the answer to His promise to Israel. "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us!" (Isaiah 7).

That young woman with child, that Virgin, promised to Israel, is Miriam, the Hebrew name for Mary. Mary's "Yes" is called the Fiat in Latin, "Let it be done." Mary's Fiat was spoken from a heart filled with total dedication and love for God. In a Biblical context, "heart" is a word that means much more than the fleshy organ at the center of our chest cavity. It refers to our center, the core of each of us, the place where our deepest identity is rooted, and from which our fundamental choices about life are made. The little Virgin of Nazareth teaches us how to live our Christian life. When the Angel of the Lord appeared, bearing the message and calling her to a special mission, she said "YES." We must say "Yes" as well and believe that "nothing is impossible with God."

Let's consider her response to the message: "I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be to me according to your Word." It is in these words that we can discover the heart of every Christian vocation.

Gregory of Nyssa once wrote: "What came about in bodily form in Mary, the fullness of the godhead shining through Christ in the Blessed Virgin, takes place in a similar way in every soul that has been made pure. The Lord does not come in bodily form, for 'we no longer know Christ according to the flesh', but He dwells in us spiritually and the Father takes up His abode with Him, the Gospel tells us. In this way the child Jesus is born in each of us."

Have we given our YES to the Lord today?

2. Our second reading is ripe with beautiful theological and spiritual insights, as is the entire Letter to the Hebrews. The excerpt chosen for today's Feast of the Annunciation follows through on the theme which the Church, as mother and teacher, invites us to reflect upon, the deeper mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

"You gave me a body"... The wonder of the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity! In the womb of a Holy Virgin, the Word became flesh. And, in Him, through the offering of His Body on the Second Tree on Golgotha Hill, the New Covenant will be instituted for all men and women.

Let me touch upon only ONE the insights that this reading touches upon.

From the very moment Jesus became Incarnate, His saving mission of redeeming and re-creating began. The Incarnation is the very heart of the Mystery of the entire Christian Faith. The God, who made the whole universe and created man out of the dust of the earth, took on our humanity. He lived in the first home of every human person, His mother's womb.

There was a Redeemer in the womb of Mary! The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of the Father, was an embryonic human person, a fetus, a child in the womb. Of course, that Person, from the moment of conception, as the Ancient Christian Creeds affirm, was - and is - True God and True Man.

In the light of this mystery every human pregnancy, every womb, every child in the womb, was forever elevated beyond the dignity it already possessed. Also, the extreme evil of abortion is made even more obvious and profane. This Redeemer in the womb, Jesus, began His saving work "in utero" and He identifies with every child in the womb. Jesus was an "embryonic person" and is forever identified with all embryonic persons.

Are we passionately Pro-Life? We should be!

3. The encounter between Mary and the Angel recounted in the Gospel for today's Holy Mass and Feast of the Annunciation also opens up the meaning of our own lives, by shedding light on our call to participate in God's loving plan.

In the midst of all of the challenges we face as Catholic Christians in a Culture which has forgotten God, we are invited to celebrate God's loving plan - and to remember the great liberating promise of the Gospel is intended for all men and women. We are the bearers of Good News in an age of bad news.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ. (CCC#487)"

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Years ago, I wrote a reflective book entitled "The Prayer of Mary: Living the Surrendered Life." Its intended audience were Christians of other communities who, in the sad aftermath of the hundreds of years of divisions in Western Christianity, have often lost the great treasure of the witness of Mary - as mother, model of the faith and symbol of the Church. The Catholic Catechism summarizes this mystery in these words:

"At once virgin and mother, Mary is the symbol and the most perfect realization of the Church: "the Church indeed. . . by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By preaching and Baptism she brings forth sons, who are conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin, who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse." (CCC#507)

Mary teaches us to stay afloat in the ocean of life, with all of its undertows. Mary's way is to become an ark within, where the same God who became incarnate within her takes up His residence in us. He comes to dwell in all men and women who say "Yes" to Him. Mary invites us to participate in the ongoing incarnation of God's Love, for the sake of world which He still loves.

It is an invitation to live our own lives for the Lord. To say yes to His continual invitations. The ongoing re-creative and redemptive work of God's love in Jesus Christ continues through us. We are members of His Body. As learn how to become arks, or dwelling places, through which Incarnate Love comes alive for all those around us, we participate in the loving plan of God for others.

We enter into Christ's continuing Incarnation and participate in his ongoing redemptive mission as we respond in the same way Mary did to His invitation: "Behold the servant of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to Thy word."

Mary, in her selflessness, was open to the angel's visit. She recognized who was speaking. She listened, received and responded. In so doing, she shows us the way to respond to the Lord's call in our own lives.

God initiates a relationship with each one of us - and we respond in surrendering freely to Him. This dynamic, this heavenly road, leads to a dialogue, a conversation, a way of life. By saying Yes, through our own Fiat, we are Consecrated and enlisted in the ongoing mission of the Lord. Mary shows us that way.

How are we doing?

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 9, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 9th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 4:32-37

32 The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, as everything they owned was held in common.

33 The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all accorded great respect.

34 None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from the sale of them,

35 to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any who might be in need.

36 There was a Levite of Cypriot origin called Joseph whom the apostles surnamed Barnabas (which means 'son of encouragement').

37 He owned a piece of land and he sold it and brought the money and presented it to the apostles.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 93:1, 1-2, 5

1 Yahweh is king, robed in majesty, robed is Yahweh and girded with power.

2 The world is indeed set firm, it can never be shaken; your throne is set firm from of old, from all eternity you exist.

5 Your decrees stand firm, unshakeable, holiness is the beauty of your house, Yahweh, for all time to come.

Gospel, John 3:7-15

7 Do not be surprised when I say: You must be born from above.

8 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.

9 'How is that possible?' asked Nicodemus.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

10 Jesus replied, 'You are the Teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things!

11 '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.

12 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?

13 No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of man;

14 as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up

15 so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 9, 2024

1. In our first reading from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, we are given a window into the pattern or way of life in the early Church. Before they were called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) the early followers of Jesus Christ were often referred to as "the Way".

The Apostle Paul, in recounting his own conversion, speaks of having persecuted "this Way" (Acts 22: 3-16) prior to his encounter with the Risen Lord on the Road to Damascus. This expression "the Way" reveals a profoundly important aspect of the understanding of the early Christians. They believed and proclaimed that the Christian faith was to be expressed in a new way of living. It still is.

Our relationship with Jesus Christ and membership in His Body, the Church, is meant to effect change in every aspect of our lives as human persons and also the way in which we participate in civil society. There is an ancient Christian manuscript entitled "The Letter to Diognetus" which most historians date back to 125AD. It contained an insight concerning the relationship of Christians to the world which, though seemingly simple, is the key to understanding the heart of the matter. The letter was an "apology," which means a defense of the early Christian faith and lifestyle.

It was addressed to an anonymous Pagan inquirer into the Christian faith. It was written by an unknown author. Its importance is underscored by the fact that it was one of the documents favored by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council and quoted quite often.

They use it as the foundational basis of their teaching on social involvement in the documents which address the role of the Church in the Modern world. It is cited in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in its excellent treatment of the duties of citizenship (CCC 2234-2246). It is regularly referred to in social encyclicals and explanatory sources.

The last line of this beautiful description of the early church reads as follows:

"In a word, what the soul is in a body, the Christians are in the world...." Christians are still called to be the "Soul of the World" in our age. How do we see our own role in "the world"? Do we live a unity of life?

2. The Psalmist David says to the Lord "holiness is the beauty of your house, Yahweh, for all time to come." The Catholic Catechism, emphasizing the teaching of the scriptures, and the renewal of its emphasis in the Second Vatican Council, underscores the truth that ALL CHRISTIANS are called to holiness.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

2013 "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity. "All are called to holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

"In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor. Thus, the holiness of the People of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints."

All of us are called to be saints. The word means "Holy Ones". Do we take this call seriously?

3. Christians are called to be the "Soul of the World" in our age. We are the solution to the brokenness of this age, caused by sin and separation. We are to be light in the darkness of the Hour.

That beautiful phrase "soul of the world" has implications for how we approach every single area of our life. We are called into the world to continue the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ until He returns. We are invited through, our Baptismal vocation to live the entirety of our lives differently. In so doing, we invite our neighbors, by word and witness, to consider the truth of faith we proclaim.

In the Gospel appointed for this Easter Weekday Mass, Jesus speaks of being "lifted up". Yes, He is foretelling his crucifixion. And He is again demonstrating that all of the Old Testament symbols, including the serpent in the desert lifted up by Moses to heal the people of Israel, were types of what was to come. In the words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, "He who knew no sin, became sin, so that we could become the very righteousness of God". (2 Cor.5:21)

Jesus is still being lifted up when His disciples, and that means you and me, lift Him up in our words and the witness of our lives, every day. When we take seriously the call to become the soul of the world. How are we doing?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 10, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 10th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 5:17-26

17 Then the high priest intervened with all his supporters from the party of the Sadducees. Filled with jealousy,

18 they arrested the apostles and had them put in the public gaol.

19 But at night the angel of the Lord opened the prison gates and said as he led them out,

20 'Go and take up position in the Temple, and tell the people all about this new Life.'

21 They did as they were told; they went into the Temple at dawn and began to preach. When the high priest arrived, he and his supporters convened the Sanhedrin -- this was the full Senate of Israel -- and sent to the gaol for them to be brought.

22 But when the officials arrived at the prison they found they were not inside, so they went back and reported,

23 'We found the gaol securely locked and the warders on duty at the gates, but when we unlocked the door we found no one inside.'

24 When the captain of the Temple and the chief priests heard this news they wondered what could be happening.

25 Then a man arrived with fresh news. 'Look!' he said, 'the men you imprisoned are in the Temple. They are standing there preaching to the people.'

26 The captain went with his men and fetched them -- though not by force, for they were afraid that the people might stone them.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

2 I will praise Yahweh from my heart; let the humble hear and rejoice.

3 Proclaim with me the greatness of Yahweh, let us acclaim his name together.

4 I seek Yahweh and he answers me, frees me from all my fears.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

5 Fix your gaze on Yahweh and your face will grow bright, you will never hang your head in shame.

6 A pauper calls out and Yahweh hears, saves him from all his troubles.

7 The angel of Yahweh encamps around those who fear him, and rescues them.

8 Taste and see that Yahweh is good. How blessed are those who take refuge in him.

9 Fear Yahweh, you his holy ones; those who fear him lack for nothing.

Gospel, John 3:16-21

16 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.

17 For God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.

18 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.

19 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.

20 And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, to prevent his actions from being shown up;

21 but whoever does the truth comes out into the light, so that what he is doing may plainly appear as done in God.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 10, 2024

1. In our first reading, from the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we heard of the wonderful intervention of an angel of the Lord opening the prison doors and freeing the Apostles who had been confined to jail for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the verses which follow, the Apostles were then brought before the Council and told NOT to preach the Gospel. Led by Peter, they refused to stop. And, Peter, speaking as their leader utters these words ""We must obey God rather than men."

We can learn to important things from this account. First, that Angels are real. The word means "Messengers". And the Lord still sends them. Do we believe this? Secondly, the courage of these early Christians should inspire us to be courageous in our own day. Hostility toward believing Christians is growing. We must learn to "obey God rather than men."

2. Our Psalm response from Psalm 54 echoes the theme, David tells us "I will praise Yahweh from my heart; let the humble hear and rejoice. Proclaim with me the greatness of Yahweh, let us acclaim his name together.

I seek Yahweh and he answers me, frees me from all my fears. Fix your gaze on Yahweh and your face will grow bright, you will never hang your head in shame."

Let us do this and not only hear it. Let us choose to proclaim the greatness of God and acclaim His name together.

3. The Gospel appointed for Holy Mass today is taken from the third chapter of the Gospel according to St John. One of the most memorized verses in the Bible - "God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten son so that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life."

God still loves the world. And He still sends His Son into the world to bring all men and women back to Him. He uses you and me in this rescue mission.

As members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church, we are His instruments. The Lord lives in us and continues His Mission through us. Do we tell people about Jesus Christ? We should. He is the answer to every human need.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 11, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Thursday, April 11th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 5:27-33

27 When they had brought them in to face the Sanhedrin, the high priest demanded an explanation.

28 'We gave you a strong warning', he said, 'not to preach in this name, and what have you done? You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and seem determined to fix the guilt for this man's death on us.'

29 In reply Peter and the apostles said, 'Obedience to God comes before obedience to men;

30 it was the God of our ancestors who raised up Jesus, whom you executed by hanging on a tree.

31 By his own right hand God has now raised him up to be leader and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins through him to Israel.

32 We are witnesses to this, we and the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

33 This so infuriated them that they wanted to put them to death.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 34:2, 9, 17-18, 19-20

2 I will praise Yahweh from my heart; let the humble hear and rejoice.

9 Fear Yahweh, you his holy ones; those who fear him lack for nothing.

17 They cry in anguish and Yahweh hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.

18 Yahweh is near to the broken-hearted, he helps those whose spirit is crushed.

19 Though hardships without number beset the upright, Yahweh brings rescue from them all.

20 Yahweh takes care of all their bones, not one of them will be broken.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 3:31-36

31 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

32 bears witness to the things he has seen and heard, but his testimony is not accepted by anybody;

33 though anyone who does accept his testimony is attesting that God is true,

34 since he whom God has sent speaks God's own words, for God gives him the Spirit without reserve.

35 The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything to his hands.

36 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.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 11, 2024

1. In spite of being prohibited from speaking the Name of Jesus or preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, the Apostles preached with ever greater fervor. Peter and the Apostles responded to the experience of being dragged again before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin with these words: "We must obey God rather than men"

The Apostles resistance was not rebellion. It was not disobedience. It was fidelity to the higher law, the Law of God. It sprung from a well-formed conscience and a bedrock belief in the Natural Law written on every human heart by God. In our day and age, such a response is also called forth when civil authorities pass legislation or Courts issue rulings which violate the Natural Moral Law. For example, failing to recognize the fundamental Right to Life of our first neighbors in the womb! Such "laws" are unjust laws, which are not law at all.

Saint Augustine said of an unjust law, "For it seems to me that an unjust law is no law at all." Saint Thomas Aquinas explained, "Human law is law only in virtue of its accordance with right reason: and thus, it is manifest that it flows from the eternal law. And in so far as it deviates from right reason it is called an unjust law; in such case it is no law at all, but rather a species of violence." In doing so, they echoed Cicero, Aristotle and Plato and the entire Natural Law Tradition.

Martin Luther King, Jr., in his 1963 Letter from a Birmingham Jail, gave this explanation of how one determines whether a law is unjust, "How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law."

Do we have the courage of the early Apostles in this hour? Will we choose to obey God rather than men when the time comes?

2. The Psalmist David sings these words which are in our Responsorial Psalm today:

"I will praise Yahweh from my heart;
let the humble hear and rejoice.
Fear Yahweh, you his holy ones; those who fear him lack for nothing.
They cry in anguish and Yahweh hears, and rescues them from all their troubles."

Fear of God is different than servile fear. It is best understood as AWE of God accompanied by a firm resolution to put obedience to Him above all else. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches (Par.1831) "The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David. They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations."

Do we fear the Lord? Are we docile in obeying Him?

3. The Gospel proclaimed in today's Holy Mass follows upon words of John the Baptist addressed to those who thought he might be the Messiah. John says, in the verse right before this text, "He (meaning Jesus) must increase and I must decrease"

The One from above is Jesus Christ. He is the One sent from heaven. Jesus says "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.'

The words of the Savior are crystal clear. Do we believe in the Son? Have we placed Jesus Christ FIRST in our lives? Can we echo the words of the Baptizer today, "Jesus must increase and I must decrease"?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 12, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Friday, April 12th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 5:34-42

34 One member of the Sanhedrin, however, a Pharisee called Gamaliel, who was a teacher of the Law respected by the whole people, stood up and asked to have the men taken outside for a time.

35 Then he addressed the Sanhedrin, 'Men of Israel, be careful how you deal with these people.

36 Some time ago there arose Theudas. He claimed to be someone important, and collected about four hundred followers; but when he was killed, all his followers scattered and that was the end of them.

37 And then there was Judas the Galilean, at the time of the census, who attracted crowds of supporters; but he was killed too, and all his followers dispersed.

38 What I suggest, therefore, is that you leave these men alone and let them go. If this enterprise, this movement of theirs, is of human origin it will break up of its own accord;

39 but if it does in fact come from God you will be unable to destroy them. Take care not to find yourselves fighting against God.' His advice was accepted;

40 and they had the apostles called in, gave orders for them to be flogged, warned them not to speak in the name of Jesus and released them.

41 And so they left the presence of the Sanhedrin, glad to have had the honour of suffering humiliation for the sake of the name.

42 Every day they went on ceaselessly teaching and proclaiming the good news of Christ Jesus, both in the temple and in private houses.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 27:1, 4, 13-14

1 [Of David] Yahweh is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear? Yahweh is the fortress of my life, whom should I dread?

4 One thing I ask of Yahweh, one thing I seek: to dwell in Yahweh's house all the days of my life, to enjoy the sweetness of Yahweh, to seek out his temple.

13 This I believe: I shall see the goodness of Yahweh, in the land of the living.

14 Put your hope in Yahweh, be strong, let your heart be bold, put your hope in Yahweh.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 6:1-15

1 After this, Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee -- or of Tiberias-

2 and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he had done in curing the sick.

3 Jesus climbed the hillside and sat down there with his disciples.

4 The time of the Jewish Passover was near.

5 Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, 'Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?'

6 He said this only to put Philip to the test; he himself knew exactly what he was going to do.

7 Philip answered, 'Two hundred denarii would not buy enough to give them a little piece each.'

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said,

9 'Here is a small boy with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that among so many?'

10 Jesus said to them, 'Make the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass there, and as many as five thousand men sat down.

11 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.

12 When they had eaten enough he said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing is wasted.'

13 So they picked them up and filled twelve large baskets with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves.

14 Seeing the sign that he had done, the people said, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.'

15 Jesus, as he realised they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, fled back to the hills alone.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 12, 2024

1. During these weekdays of the Easter Liturgical season, while we move toward the great Feast of Pentecost, we follow the heroic actions of the early Apostles and disciples. Clearly, they had been changed, by the Power of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit. Today's Excerpt from the fifth chapter is an example.

The Apostles had been imprisoned for preaching about Jesus and continuing to manifest the signs of the Kingdom which He inaugurated with signs and wonders. They are no longer afraid. They have a new HOLY BOLDNESS!

An angel opened the doors of the Prison during the evening and told them to continue...and they did. Even though they had been threatened and told NOT to preach in the name of Jesus.

It is the prudence of Gamliel which governs the response of the persecutors of the early Church. And, the Apostles are set free, after being flogged. They were ordered to stop preaching in the name of Jesus. They left, rejoicing at being found worthy to suffer for the Lord.

Wow. We suffer soft persecution these days. Being ridiculed, mocked, accused of being "fundamentalist" or insensitive to other ways of thought, under what Pope Emeritus Benedict called a "Dictatorship of Relativism". How do we respond?

2. David the Psalmist gives us a key as to how we can grow in holy boldness, dwell in the House of the Lord. How do we do that? By staying in communion with Him, in prayer. We are now joined to the Father, in and through Jesus Christ. We are joined to one another, in and through Jesus Christ. But we can only live this out, if we keep our hearts and minds fixed on the Lord. How often do we call upon the Lord throughout the day?
3. Our Gospel today is St. John's account of the multiplication of the loaves and fish. The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish is found in all four gospels, emphasizing its significance. As is often the case, each of the four evangelists focus on particular aspects of the miracle in order to emphasize for the reader the significance and implication of the event in their own lives. The disciples did not see the need of the crowd with the eyes of living faith. However, Jesus did - and He wants all who bear His name to learn to walk by the light of that same faith. He gives us the grace to do so.

In His Sacred Humanity, Jesus was moved with compassion for the crowd. The Greek root of the word for compassion means to suffer with. The disciples viewed the matter as a problem. They approached it through a lens of economic scarcity. Jesus understood the economy of heaven. The question He asks of all of us today is - do we?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Jesus asked the disciples a simple question: "what do you have?" They did not understand. They had been invited to participate in God's work by simply giving what they had in a Holy Exchange. When they finally did, Jesus used the matter given by men, loaves and fish, to manifest the manna of heaven. He still does.

St. John the theologian uses the little boy to demonstrate the condition of the heart required to enter this part of the meaning of the miracle of the loaves. (John 6) As a child, he held nothing back. He simply gave what he had. Will we give what we have? Gather the Fragments, live the miracle.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 13, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Saturday, April 13th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 6:1-7

1 About this time, when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenists made a complaint against the Hebrews: in the daily distribution their own widows were being overlooked.

2 So the Twelve called a full meeting of the disciples and addressed them, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food;

3 you, brothers, must select from among yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom, to whom we can hand over this duty.

4 We ourselves will continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.'

5 The whole assembly approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

6 They presented these to the apostles, and after prayer they laid their hands on them.

7 The word of the Lord continued to spread: the number of disciples in Jerusalem was greatly increased, and a large group of priests made their submission to the faith.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19

1 Shout for joy, you upright; praise comes well from the honest.

2 Give thanks to Yahweh on the lyre, play for him on the ten-stringed lyre.

4 The word of Yahweh is straightforward, all he does springs from his constancy.

5 He loves uprightness and justice; the faithful love of Yahweh fills the earth.

18 But see how Yahweh watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his faithful love,

19 to rescue them from death and keep them alive in famine.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 6:16-21

16 That evening the disciples went down to the shore of the sea

17 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.

18 The wind was strong, and the sea was getting rough.

19 They had rowed three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming towards the boat. They were afraid,

20 but he said, 'It's me. Don't be afraid.'

21 They were ready to take him into the boat, and immediately it reached the shore at the place they were making for.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 13, 2024

1. In our first reading we see the Church at Jerusalem growing rapidly and the pastoral and practical needs increasing. Led by the Holy Spirit, the Apostles choose to institute an order of men who will serve in the Office of Deacon. It would free the Apostles to pursue their chief mission of prayer, preaching and teaching. With the imposition of the hands of the Apostles, seven men were ordained.

While this particular passage focuses on their task of serving the needs of widows, the following chapters present us with the witness of Stephen the Deacon preaching and becoming the first Martyr of the Church, and Philip the Deacon opening up the Book of Isaiah the Prophet for the Ethiopian Eunuch and leading him into the waters of Baptism.

So, the Office of Deacon was a part of the early ordering of Ordained ministry within the nascent church.

There are three orders in the Sacrament of Holy Orders, Bishop, Priest and Deacon. Therefore, Deacons are clergy in the Catholic Church, not laymen. Deacons are ordained to be an "icon" (an image which makes present what it reflects) of Jesus the Servant, for the Church and the world. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, citing the Bible, ancient Christian sources and the documents of Church Councils, explains that Deacons are ordained, not to the sacramental priesthood, but "to the ministry."

The Catholic Catechism explains:

1569 "At a lower level of the hierarchy are to be found deacons, who receive the imposition of hands 'not unto the priesthood, but unto the ministry.'" At an ordination to the diaconate only the bishop lays hands on the candidate, thus signifying the deacon's special attachment to the bishop in the tasks of his "diakonia."

I have had the honor of serving as a Deacon for twenty-four years. There are close to 20,000 ordained deacons in the United States alone. Do you know a Deacon? Do you pray for the Deacons of the Church?

2. David the Psalmist, in the words of our responsorial Psalm, tells us to "shout for joy" and to praise and give thanks. How often do we do that? There is so much to be thankful for!

Christian Joy finds its root in the relationship we now have in and through Jesus Christ, with the Father, in the Holy Spirit. That relationship not only survives struggle, it thrives in struggle. That is, for those who have living faith. We can learn to rejoice because the Lord is always near.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

One of the Psalms we chant in the Liturgy of the Hours reminds us of this bedrock truth, "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed. Many are the troubles of the just, but the LORD delivers from them all." (Psalm 34:19,20)

Christian joy is a fruit of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer (Galatians 5:22). It is meant to be reflected in a new way of living. It also reveals the character of Christ being formed in a believer. It does not mean smiling all the time - though for many of us a bit more smiling would be a good idea.

Rather, Christian joy, Gospel Joy, means living as though we know that Jesus never leaves us. He meant it when he said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Mt. 28:20)

3. The Gospel appointed for today's Mass is the Apostle John's account of Jesus calming the storm for His disciples. Sometimes, we hear or read these stories and stop listening because we have heard them so often! We fail to allow the Lord to speak to us personally. St. Josemaria Escriva encourages believers to enter into these stories, place ourselves in the scene, as one of the participants, and allow the Lord to speak. In *Friends of God* he wrote,

"If you wish to get close to Our Lord through the pages of the Gospels, I always recommend that you try to enter in on the scene taking part as just one more person there. In this way (and I know many perfectly ordinary people who live this way) you will be captivated like Mary was, who hung on every word that Jesus uttered or, like Martha, you will boldly make your worries known to him, opening your heart sincerely about them all no matter how little they may be."

We can miss our encounter with the Lord if we think that the story is only about Peter and the disciples - something distant which happened over two millennia ago. The story is meant for you and me - in the here and now! We live much of our daily life in the fourth watch of the night, at the time just before daybreak. At the end of a night which seems it will never end.

We often live in waves of struggle, filled with fear and crippled as a result - and unable to see the Lord on the horizon of hope. This story shows us how to overcome fear through faith, inviting us to live differently, to walk on the waters of daily life by dynamic, living faith.

Do we turn to the Lord in our own storms of life? We should.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection April 14, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Sunday, April 14th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

13 It is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified his servant Jesus whom you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate after he had given his verdict to release him.

14 It was you who accused the Holy and Upright One, you who demanded that a murderer should be released to you

15 while you killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are witnesses;

17 'Now I know, brothers, that neither you nor your leaders had any idea what you were really doing;

18 but this was the way God carried out what he had foretold, when he said through all his prophets that his Christ would suffer.

19 Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9

2 Children of men, how long will you be heavy of heart, why love what is vain and chase after illusions?

4 Be careful not to sin, speak in your hearts, and on your beds keep silence.

7 to my heart you are a richer joy than all their corn and new wine.

8 In peace I lie down and at once fall asleep, for it is you and none other, Yahweh, who make me rest secure.

Reading 2, First John 2:1-5

1 My children, I am writing this to prevent you from sinning; but if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the upright.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

2 He is the sacrifice to expiate our sins, and not only ours, but also those of the whole world.

3 In this way we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 Whoever says, 'I know him' without keeping his commandments, is a liar, and truth has no place in him.

5 But anyone who does keep his word, in such a one God's love truly reaches its perfection. This is the proof that we are in God.

Gospel, Luke 24:35-48

35 Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

36 They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!'

37 In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost.

38 But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts?'

39 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.'

40 And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet.

41 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?'

42 And they offered him a piece of grilled fish,

43 which he took and ate before their eyes.

44 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.'

45 He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures,

46 and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

47 and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

48 You are witnesses to this.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 14, 2024

1. Our first reading on this Third Sunday of Easter is a sermon which the Apostle Peter preached in the temple after Peter spoke these powerful words to a man who was lame from birth:

"I have no silver and gold, but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

And, Acts 3 continues:

"And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up he stood and walked and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God and recognized him as the one who sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's, astounded. And when Peter saw it he addressed the people... "

Then what we heard today was his message, boldly proclaiming the Gospel and calling those in the temple to repentance. Notice, the Lord was continuing His ministry. Now, through His Apostles. And, these Apostles had just left the upper room, where they had been filled with the Holy Spirit. So, it is in our day. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, and Jesus is with us right now. Do we truly believe this? We should. And, the same Holy Spirit has been given to each one of us. We need to recover the holy boldness and living faith which characterized the early Church.

2. In our second reading, we heard important words from the beloved disciple John. His three letters were written to all of the early churches and were circulated. The Apostle writes about living the faith. In this important passage he both exhorts the early believers not to sin. Rather, to keep the commandments, live in the light, stay faithful to the Lord, love one another and grow in Christian maturity.

Yet, he also reminds them that if we do sin, if we do make wrong choices, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ who is the expiation for our sins. By His Cross, our guilt was and is extinguished, if we repent and turn back to the Lord.

This is true for each one of us. We, as followers of Jesus Christ, Christians, are called to keep His commandments, to live in the light, and to love one another. But, if we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Do we believe this? Do we live our lives in the Light? During these weeks of Easter, we are given special grace to choose to be faithful. The One who died for us on that Cross, burst forth from the Tomb. He is alive! Believe, Receive and Live this Truth.

3. Our Gospel text on this Third Sunday of Easter is taken from the last chapter of St. Luke. It immediately follows the wonderful account of the Risen Jesus walking alongside of two of the disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus. They did not recognize Him, at first. Even as he broke open all the scriptures for them. They finally recognized him in the breaking of the bread. This points to the Eucharist, the breaking of the Bread.

Then He vanished from their sight. The two disciples recounted this wonderful post-Resurrection account to the others when Jesus stood in the midst of them all and greeted them "Peace be with you". He showed them His glorified wounds and invited them to touch them! Then, he ate the fish they offered. Then, He "opened their minds to understand the scriptures. WOW!

The Risen Jesus wanted them to know He was alive, in His glorified Body. He wants us to know that as well. Jesus Christ is not dead. He has been raised. And we receive Him in the most Holy Eucharist. We too can have our minds opened to understand the Scriptures. And, we are also called, TODAY, to be witnesses to the whole world. No matter our state in life or career or age or even vocation, we are first disciples of the Risen Lord, called to bring the world to Jesus Christ. How are we doing?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 15, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Monday, April 15th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 6:8-15

8 Stephen was filled with grace and power and began to work miracles and great signs among the people.

9 Then certain people came forward to debate with Stephen, some from Cyrene and Alexandria who were members of the synagogue called the Synagogue of Freedmen, and others from Cilicia and Asia.

10 They found they could not stand up against him because of his wisdom, and the Spirit that prompted what he said.

11 So they procured some men to say, 'We heard him using blasphemous language against Moses and against God.'

12 Having turned the people against him as well as the elders and scribes, they took Stephen by surprise, and arrested him and brought him before the Sanhedrin.

13 There they put up false witnesses to say, 'This man is always making speeches against this Holy Place and the Law.

14 We have heard him say that Jesus, this Nazarene, is going to destroy this Place and alter the traditions that Moses handed down to us.'

15 The members of the Sanhedrin all looked intently at Stephen, and his face appeared to them like the face of an angel.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30

23 Though princes sit plotting against me, your servant keeps pondering your will.

24 Your instructions are my delight, your wishes my counsellors.

26 I tell you my ways and you answer me; teach me your wishes.

27 Show me the way of your precepts, that I may reflect on your wonders.

29 Keep me far from the way of deceit, grant me the grace of your Law.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

30 I have chosen the way of constancy, I have moulded myself to your judgements.

Gospel, John 6:22-29

22 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.

23 Other boats, however, had put in from Tiberias, near the place where the bread had been eaten.

24 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.

25 When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?'

26 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.

27 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.

28 Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to carry out God's work?'

29 Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is carrying out God's work: you must believe in the one he has sent.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 15, 2024

1. In our first reading appointed for Holy Mass today, we encounter the Deacon Stephen. He, along with six others, had the hands of the Apostles laid upon him and he was set aside for ministry, to be a reflection of Christ the Deacon. The word is derived from a Greek word which means servant. His holiness is apparent in this brief passage. Even to his persecutors, he had "the face of an angel".

The enemies of the Lord Jesus, the One whom Peter so beautifully reflected, treat him as they treated the Master. They falsely accuse him and look for ways to put him to death. Which, they soon do. And, Stephen dies a Martyrs death. The first Martyr of the early Christian Church was a Deacon. The word Martyr is derived from a Greek word which means witness. The Catholic Catechism explains, and I quote:

"2472 The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as witnesses of the Gospel and of the obligations that flow from it. This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds. Witness is an act of justice that establishes the truth or makes it known.269

All Christians by the example of their lives and the witness of their word, wherever they live, have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at Confirmation. 270

"2473 Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death. The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through an act of fortitude. "Let me become the food of the beasts, through whom it will be given me to reach God."

That last phrase was taken from a letter written by the early Church Bishop and Martyr Ignatius who would be martyred by being fed to wild beasts. EVERY CHRISTIAN is called to be a witness. Some are called to shed their blood. In fact, we are living in an age of red martyrs. In February of 2015, members of the Islamic State beheaded 21 Egyptian Christians and posted the barbaric act on YouTube. The terrorist act was part of their violent effort to spread their Islamic Caliphate throughout the Middle East and beyond.

The execution took place on a beach in Libya. These men were beheaded precisely because they were Christians. They can be seen calling on the true God and His Son Jesus Christ, as their evil executioners committed this act of savagery.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Most of us are called to be what the tradition has called white martyrs. We will not be asked to shed our blood. But we are asked to bear witness to Jesus Christ with lives totally given over to Him. Are we willing to do that?

2. The Psalmist, as he so often does, focuses us on the Word of God as our source of stability and inspiration, even when "princes plot against us", literally or figuratively. Notice his clear love for the Word of God: "Your instructions are my delight, your wishes my counsellors...Show me the way of your precepts, that I may reflect on your wonders."

It is that love for the Word, and our reflection upon it, which will keep us strong in times of travail. And, our willingness to "mold ourselves" to Gods word. Do we read the Bible regularly? Do we seek Gods wisdom in it? Are we willing to be molded by the Word of God?

3. In our Gospel text for this Mass, the Apostle John presents us with the scene of the crowds "looking for Jesus". And, Jesus asks why? Was it the bread? Was it the miracles? He takes the opportunity to focus the disciples on what matters most to all who choose to follow Jesus Christ, doing the work of God. And he explains that the work of God is to believe in the One who He has sent. He is that One.

The early Christians knew the dignity of all human work. Even their early worship became known as "liturgy" which literally meant the "work" of the Church. For them, the real world was not a place to be avoided - it was their workshop! They were there to bring all of its inhabitants to Baptism and inclusion in Christ and then prepare the real world for His Real return, through their prayer, their witness, their worship and their work.

For the Christian, "work" is an invitation to participate in that extraordinary plan, when it is joined to Jesus Christ. No matter what we are doing we are, as the Apostle wrote, to "do it as unto the Lord" (see Col 3). Our work then changes "the world", both within us and around us. This means all work - not just the so called "spiritual" or "religious" stuff, has redemptive value.

To be a Christian is to believe in Jesus Christ, to accept Him as our Lord and Savior, and to decide to follow Him. It is not enough to know ABOUT Jesus. We are called to KNOW Jesus. That requires an ongoing encounter with Him. It also invites us into a participation in His ongoing Work of redemption. Do we understand our Christian faith as a call to a new way of life? Do we believe it invites us into the work of the Lord? It is - and it does.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 16, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 16th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 7:51--8:1

51 'You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears. You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do.

52 Can you name a single prophet your ancestors never persecuted? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Upright One, and now you have become his betrayers, his murderers.

53 In spite of being given the Law through angels, you have not kept it.'

54 They were infuriated when they heard this, and ground their teeth at him.

55 But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand.

56 'Look! I can see heaven thrown open,' he said, 'and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.'

57 All the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they made a concerted rush at him,

58 thrust him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of a young man called Saul.

59 As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

60 Then he knelt down and said aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' And with these words he fell asleep.

1 Saul approved of the killing. That day a bitter persecution started against the church in Jerusalem, and everyone except the apostles scattered to the country districts of Judaea and Samaria.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 31:3-4, 6, 7, 8, 17, 21

3 You are my rock, my rampart; true to your name, lead me and guide me!

4 Draw me out of the net they have spread for me, for you are my refuge;

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

6 you hate those who serve useless idols; but my trust is in Yahweh:

7 I will delight and rejoice in your faithful love! You, who have seen my misery, and witnessed the miseries of my soul,

8 have not handed me over to the enemy, but have given me freedom to roam at large.

17 I call on you, Yahweh, so let disgrace fall not on me, but on the wicked. Let them go down to Sheol in silence,

21 Blessed be Yahweh who works for me miracles of his faithful love (in a fortified city)!

Gospel, John 6:30-35

30 So they said, 'What sign will you yourself do, the sight of which will make us believe in you? What work will you do?'

31 Our fathers ate manna in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

32 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;

33 for the bread of God is the bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

34 'Sir,' they said, 'give us that bread always.'

35 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 16, 2024

1. In our first reading for today's Mass, we continue with Luke's account of the martyrdom of the Deacon St. Stephen found in the Acts of the Apostles. It begins with the end of Stephens courageous sermon before the hostile Sanhedrin - where he minces no words. He preaches the whole Gospel in the Power of the Holy Spirit. When the listeners respond in rage, grinding their teeth - We read Stephens response to their rage:

"Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look! I can see heaven thrown open,' he said, 'and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.' So they took him out of town and stoned him to death.

Two things we could reflect on as we ponder this first Christian Martyr. First, how conformed he was to His Lord, and our Lord, Jesus Christ. While they are unjustly killing him, precisely because of his faith in Jesus Christ and his fidelity to Him, we hear his response: "As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and said aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' And with these words he fell asleep."

Secondly, one of those who was there, a Rabbi named Saul. He was there because he was persecuting the early Church. But the Lord had a different plan for Saul. He too would encounter this Jesus whom Stephen loved so much he was ready to die for Him. And, Saul would, in that encounter, on his way to Damascus, become the great Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. How much did the holy witness of Stephen prepare the heart of Saul for that encounter?

Our own witness to Jesus can also prepare the way for others to turn to Jesus. Do we believe this?

2. As we respond with the words from the Psalm of David, Psalm 31, we should make the prayer our own. This is why the Psalms are such a foundational part of the official prayer of the Church. When recited, prayed or chanted regularly, we enter into them and they draw us closer to God. Listen and make these words your own as you offer them to the Lord:

"You are my rock, my rampart; true to your name, lead me and guide me!

Draw me out of the net they have spread for me, for you are my refuge;

you hate those who serve useless idols; but my trust is in Yahweh:

I will delight and rejoice in your faithful love!"



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. The passage from the sixth chapter of St. John appointed for today is a continuation from yesterday. Jesus is explaining the work of God is to believe in Him. It contains a portion of the Bread of Life discourse. Jesus is trying to open the hearts of those assembled to the deeper mysteries of His messianic role. They reference the manna which God gave the Israelites in the desert. And, they ask what sign He will give for them to believe. Jesus said:

"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. What follows as the chapter continue is so profound, that even some who had followed Him will leave His company as he explains that the bread, He will give is His flesh for the life of the world.

God met His people Israel in the desert of their despair. Out of His love He fed their physical hunger. After hearing their cry, he miraculously intervened by providing "manna". Yet, sadly, these same people who had received this provision soon began to murmur and complain to Moses about God's provision.

At a place called Taberah, they cried out "But now we are famished; we see nothing before us but this manna." (Numbers, 11:6). Gods' miraculous provision had not changed, the people had. Their hearts had turned away from God and they fell out of communion. The blessing of heaven soon became their cause for complaint.

That can happen to us when we fail to cultivate our relationship with the Lord who now gives us Bread from Heaven. The Bread Jesus gives is His flesh for the Life of the world. This is the Living Bread which satisfies every hunger. In the Holy Eucharist we sacramentally receive the Lord Himself as eternal food for our journey through this life and into the life of the world to come.

The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas once wrote: "Material food first of all turns itself into the person who eats it, and as a consequence, restores his losses and increases his vital energies. Spiritual food, on the other hand, turns the person who eats it into Itself, and thus the proper effect of this sacrament is the conversion of man into Christ, so that he may no longer live for himself, but that Christ may live in Him. And as a consequence, it has the double effect of restoring the spiritual losses caused by sins and defects and of increasing the power of the virtues".



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The great Bishop of Hippo, St. Augustine, recorded similar words which he heard in the Spirit from the Lord. We find them in the account of his conversion, the Confession: "I am the food of grown men. Grow, and you shall feed upon me. You will not change me into yourself, as you change food into your flesh, but you will be changed into me!"

When we feed on this heavenly food, the Lord Jesus comes to dwell within us and make us like Himself. We give thanks by living our lives differently. That is what the word Eucharist means, thanksgiving.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 17, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 17th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 8:1-8

1 Saul approved of the killing. That day a bitter persecution started against the church in Jerusalem, and everyone except the apostles scattered to the country districts of Judaea and Samaria.

2 There were some devout people, however, who buried Stephen and made great mourning for him.

3 Saul then began doing great harm to the church; he went from house to house arresting both men and women and sending them to prison.

4 Once they had scattered, they went from place to place preaching the good news.

5 And Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them.

6 The people unanimously welcomed the message Philip preached, because they had heard of the miracles he worked and because they saw them for themselves.

7 For unclean spirits came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured.

8 As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7

1 [For the choirmaster Song Psalm] Acclaim God, all the earth,

2 sing psalms to the glory of his name, glorify him with your praises,

3 say to God, 'How awesome you are! 'Your achievements are the measure of your power, your enemies woo your favour,

4 all the earth bows down before you, sings psalms to you, sings psalms to your name.

5 Come and see the marvels of God, his awesome deeds for the children of Adam:

6 he changed the sea into dry land, they crossed the river on foot. So let us rejoice in him,

7 who rules for ever by his power; his eyes keep watch on the nations to forestall rebellion against him.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 6:35-40

35 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.

36 But, as I have told you, you can see me and still you do not believe.

37 Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me; I will certainly not reject anyone who comes to me,

38 because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

39 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.

40 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 17, 2024

1. The martyrdom of the Deacon Stephen occurred at the beginning of a great persecution of the early church. One of the greatest persecutors was that Rabbi named Saul, who stood by at that unjust murder and, as our passage indicated "approved" of it. The same Acts of the Apostles bears witness, that very same persecutor had a dramatic conversion to Jesus Christ and became the great Apostle Paul. (Acts 9) Tertullian would later write that the "blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church".

Also, another Deacon, Phillip, would go forth from ordination at Jerusalem to do great work for and in the Lord, helping the Ethiopian Eunuch to understand the Messianic meaning of words from the prophet Isaiah, leading to the conversion of the official and his subsequent Baptism by Phillip. (Acts 8:26-40) In all of this, the power of the Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus Christ, worked through the early followers of the Way, the name they were referred to as before they were called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26)

That same Holy Spirit is active in the Church today. That same power is available to every Baptized Christian, if we ask. And, if we ACT. When I was a young man, a great man once told me that in a sense, the Acts of the Apostles is the only Book in the Bible still being written, because the Church, the Body of Christ, continues the ministry of Jesus, the Head of that Body. That work is done through His disciples. That includes you and Me - Do we believe this? Do we ACT as if we do?

2. How AWESOME you are, the Psalmist tells the Lord in our Responsorial Psalm appointed for us to chant in today's liturgy. He then recounts where that awesome power and love are revealed. In his achievements, in his marvels, in his awesome deeds!

God has worked powerfully in each of our lives. Taking the time to recount His actions and praise Him for such actions, is like priming a pump. The result is the praise which issues forth by the power of the Holy Spirit. Today, lets decide to take time Every Morning, like the Psalmist shows us, to recount the AWESOME deeds of the Lord and worship Him.

3. Jesus is the Bread of Life. The manna given to the people of Israel during their wandering in the desert prefigured the true bread which the Father would give when, in the fullness of time, He would send His Own Son to be our Savior.

And Jesus, in that Last Supper, gave us His very body and Blood.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains:

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

"As early as the second century we have the witness of St. Justin Martyr for the basic lines of the order of the Eucharistic celebration. They have stayed the same until our own day for all the great liturgical families. St. Justin wrote to the pagan emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161) around the year 155, explaining what Christians did:

"On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place.

The memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits. When the reader has finished, he who presides over those gathered admonishes and challenges them to imitate these beautiful things.

Then we all rise together and offer prayers* for ourselves . . .and for all others, wherever they may be, so that we may be found righteous by our life and actions, and faithful to the commandments, so as to obtain eternal salvation.

When the prayers are concluded we exchange the kiss.

"Then someone brings bread and a cup of water and wine mixed together to him who presides over the brethren.

He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and for a considerable time he gives thanks (in Greek: eucharistian) that we have been judged worthy of these gifts.

When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying: 'Amen.'

When he who presides has given thanks and the people have responded, those whom we call deacons give to those present the "eucharisted" bread, wine and water and take them to those who are absent" (CCC #1345)

Jesus told his disciples "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." We who have been given the bread of angels now carry His Life within us. We are sent into the world to carry Jesus to others. And, to bring them back to Him, helping them find their home in Him, by living their lives in the heart of His Church.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 18, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Thursday, April 18th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 8:26-40

26 The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, 'Set out at noon and go along the road that leads from Jerusalem down to Gaza, the desert road.'

27 So he set off on his journey. Now an Ethiopian had been on pilgrimage to Jerusalem; he was a eunuch and an officer at the court of the kandake, or queen, of Ethiopia; he was her chief treasurer.

28 He was now on his way home; and as he sat in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join that chariot.'

30 When Philip ran up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?'

31 He replied, 'How could I, unless I have someone to guide me?' So he urged Philip to get in and sit by his side.

32 Now the passage of scripture he was reading was this: Like a lamb led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep dumb in front of its shearers, he never opens his mouth.

33 In his humiliation fair judgement was denied him. Who will ever talk about his descendants, since his life on earth has been cut short?

34 The eunuch addressed Philip and said, 'Tell me, is the prophet referring to himself or someone else?'

35 Starting, therefore, with this text of scripture Philip proceeded to explain the good news of Jesus to him.

36 Further along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look, is some water; is there anything to prevent my being baptised?'

38 He ordered the chariot to stop, then Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water and he baptised him.

39 But after they had come up out of the water again Philip was taken away by the Spirit of the Lord, and the eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

40 Philip appeared in Azotus and continued his journey, proclaiming the good news in every town as far as Caesarea.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 66:8-9, 16-17, 20

8 Nations, bless our God, let the sound of his praise be heard;

9 he brings us to life and keeps our feet from stumbling.

16 Come and listen, all who fear God, while I tell what he has done for me.

17 To him I cried aloud, high praise was on my tongue.

20 Blessed be God who has not turned away my prayer, nor his own faithful love from me.

Gospel, John 6:44-51

44 '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.

45 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.

46 Not that anybody has seen the Father, except him who has his being from God: he has seen the Father.

47 In all truth I tell you, everyone who believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers ate manna in the desert and they are dead;

50 but this is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person may eat it and not die.

51 I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 18, 2024

1. The encounter between the Deacon Phillip and the Ethiopian Official is a wonderful example to ponder as we continue in the Easter season and will soon celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church. The Holy Spirit led Phillip to the official. The Holy Spirit worked through Phillip, breaking open the Word of God so that the official would seek Baptism. The Holy Spirit worked through Phillip and the official was Baptized into Christ. The Holy Spirit then led Phillip to his next Missionary assignment. In other words, the Holy Spirit is REAL and ACTIVE.

Jesus told the disciples that He must ascend, to "my Father and your father, my God and your God" (John 20:17) because, in His own words "If I do not go, I cannot send the comforter. And when he comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation: sin, because they do not believe in me; righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; condemnation, because the ruler of this world has been condemned."

And in the same Gospel "I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming." (John 16: 7-15)

The Christian Church was empowered by the Holy Spirit to live differently - in the midst of a world awaiting the fullness of redemption - to lead the world back to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Can we live this kind of transformed Christian life in the stuff of our own daily lives?

Yes, by living them in the heart of the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. "Nations, bless our God..." the Psalmist cries. Yet, in our day, many Nations have forgotten God. Or, even worse, erected new idols to take His place. There is a Cultural Revolution underway. There are two conflicting visions of the human person, human freedom, human flourishing and marriage and the family contending for the future. These visions are incompatible with one another. Only one will triumph.

The collapse can be averted, but only through the influence of the Christian Church and her allies. It is the Christian vision of the person, the family and the common good which will pave the way for a recovery of freedom. It is the Christian vision which will pave the way to true progress. Christianity is the antidote to the descent into barbarism arising out of the current neo-paganism masquerading as liberation. Saint John Paul II wrote frequently about human freedom. In one of his letters of instruction on the Christian family he wrote these insightful words:



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

"History is not simply a fixed progression toward what is better - but rather, an event of freedom. Specifically, it is a struggle between freedoms that are in mutual conflict: a conflict between two loves - the love of God to the point of disregarding self and the love of self to the point of disregarding God." (John Paul II, Christian Family in the Modern World, n. 6)

Where do we stand? What will we do about this ejection of God in our own Nation?

3. As His discourse on the Bread of Life continues in John's Gospel account, Jesus says, "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."

Do we believe this? Every Sunday we pray the ancient creed and profess our belief in the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Resurrection of the Body. But really, how many Catholics actually understand, actually believe, that redemption will not be fully complete until our bodies are raised? Jesus came to save the WHOLE PERSON.

The Apostle Paul addressed the Christians in Corinth on this vital truth of the Christian Faith in these words:

"Brothers and sisters: If Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then empty too is our preaching; empty, too, your faith.

"Then we are also false witnesses to God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if in fact the dead are not raised.

"For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Cor. 15:12-20)

Those were strong words- and strong for a very good reason! Already, in the first century of the Church, as close in time as those early Christians were to the actual Resurrection of Jesus Christ, His followers were beginning to doubt that His Resurrection was not only an historic fact, but what awaited each one of them. Finally, they forgot it was meant to inform their entire lives.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Already present in that nascent Christian community were errant teachers who denied the physical resurrection of Jesus. They tried to recast it as simply some kind of spiritual allegory.

When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying: 'Amen.'

When he who presides has given thanks and the people have responded, those whom we call deacons give to those present the "eucharisted" bread, wine and water and take them to those who are absent" (CCC #1345)

Jesus told his disciples "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." We who have been given the bread of angels now carry His Life within us. We are sent into the world to carry Jesus to others. And, to bring them back to Him, helping them find their home in Him, by living their lives in the heart of His Church.

Sound familiar? We need to be aware of our own history as a Church. There really is nothing new. There is also no new heresy, no new false teaching.

Do we believe in the Resurrection of the Dead, the Resurrection of the Body? If so, how do we view our own bodies?



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 19, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Friday, April 19th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 9:1-20

1 Meanwhile Saul was still breathing threats to slaughter the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest

2 and asked for letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, that would authorise him to arrest and take to Jerusalem any followers of the Way, men or women, that he might find.

3 It happened that while he was travelling to Damascus and approaching the city, suddenly a light from heaven shone all round him.

4 He fell to the ground, and then he heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

5 'Who are you, Lord?' he asked, and the answer came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.'

6 Get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you are to do.'

7 The men travelling with Saul stood there speechless, for though they heard the voice they could see no one.

8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing at all, and they had to lead him into Damascus by the hand.

9 For three days he was without his sight and took neither food nor drink.

10 There was a disciple in Damascus called Ananias, and he had a vision in which the Lord said to him, 'Ananias!' When he replied, 'Here I am, Lord,'

11 the Lord said, 'Get up and go to Straight Street and ask at the house of Judas for someone called Saul, who comes from Tarsus. At this moment he is praying,

12 and has seen a man called Ananias coming in and laying hands on him to give him back his sight.'

13 But in response, Ananias said, 'Lord, I have heard from many people about this man and all the harm he has been doing to your holy people in Jerusalem.

14 He has come here with a warrant from the chief priests to arrest everybody who invokes your name.'

15 The Lord replied, 'Go, for this man is my chosen instrument to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel;

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

16 I myself will show him how much he must suffer for my name.'

17 Then Ananias went. He entered the house, and laid his hands on Saul and said, 'Brother Saul, I have been sent by the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, so that you may recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.'

18 It was as though scales fell away from his eyes and immediately he was able to see again. So he got up and was baptised,

19 and after taking some food he regained his strength. After he had spent only a few days with the disciples in Damascus,

20 he began preaching in the synagogues, 'Jesus is the Son of God.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 117:1, 2

1 Alleluia! Praise Yahweh, all nations, extol him, all peoples,

2 for his faithful love is strong and his constancy never-ending.

Gospel, John 6:52-59

52 Then the Jews started arguing among themselves, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

53 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.

54 Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise that person up on the last day.

55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in that person.

57 As the living Father sent me and I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will also draw life from me.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

58 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 for ever.

59 This is what he taught at Capernaum in the synagogue.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 19, 2024

1. As the years of my life have unfolded, the impact of Saint Paul's conversion, and his life and the legacy which he left us in his letters to the early Church, have all shaped my own vocation and informed my way of life as a Christian. They continually challenge me to say yes to the Lord at a deeper and deeper level. After all, my life, your life...just like Saint Paul's life, is a call to continuing conversion.

After participating in the martyrdom of the Deacon Stephen, and while still breathing murderous threats against the followers of the Way (the name which was used to describe Christians until they were called Christians, See, Acts 11:26) this Rabbi named Saul encounters the Light of God, Jesus Christ, who speaks to Him.

On his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" He said, "Who are you, sir?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

As far as we can know Saul had never physically met Jesus, at least during Our Lord's earthly ministry. Yet, so identified was Jesus with the Church, which is His Body, that He asked this profound question of Saul. When Saul persecuted the members of the Body of Christ, He persecuted Jesus Himself. Jesus and His Church are one. Saul's experience on the way to Damascus and His ongoing life of responding to the invitation of Jesus Christ form a framework for his ongoing conversion as well as his apostolic mission in the Lord and for His Church.

They also remind all of us that conversion is an ongoing call which requires a response from us. Have we given our response?

2. The Psalm response for today's Holy Mass is short, but gets to the most important point:

"Alleluia! Praise Yahweh, all nations, extol him, all peoples,
for his faithful love is strong and his constancy never-ending."

Just as the Lord's faithful love is strong and constant, our response to Him should be the same. Again, Paul is an example to follow. Paul suffered and underwent deprivation in daily life. He was misunderstood and betrayed by brethren. He experienced intense emotional, economic and physical hardships. He had reasons to become bitter. He did not. He became better. That is our challenge as we embark on our own Christian life.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Because of his close communion with Jesus, the One who had called him in the desert, Paul had the interior strength that only comes from living a fully surrendered life. The Lord who called him had changed him in the encounter. This is reflected, as is often the case in the biblical accounts of vocational callings, with the change of his name from Saul to Paul. But this change, the ongoing conversion, continued as Paul learned to empty himself so that he could be filled with God.

So, it is meant to be in our own lives. In our own lives, we will suffer, we will be misunderstood, betrayed by friends, shipwrecked, at least figuratively, and we will suffer the instability that often accompanies the struggles of daily life. Paul shows us the way to choose the better way, the way of discipleship.

3. Our Gospel text is the continuation of the discourse on the Bread of Life from the very words of Jesus, as recorded by the Apostle John, contains this crystal clear statement: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in that person." There can be no doubt, from the very words of Jesus and the words of the early Church, that the early Christians took the claims of Jesus that the Bread and Wine became - and still become - His Body and Blood very seriously.

This is what theology refers to as a "mystery", from the Greek Word "Mysterium", which does not mean, as western minds might think, a puzzle to be solved. Rather, it refers to something which mere words cannot communicate adequately. It must be encountered and received. It is the word from which was derived the word "sacrament". The Eastern Church, Catholic and Orthodox still refers to the Sacraments as "the mysteries"

The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Sacraments, the Mystery of mysteries. We receive the Body, Blood soul and divinity of Jesus Christ! The Apostle Paul explained to the Corinthians:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

-1 Cor. 10:16-17

"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord." -1 Cor. 11:23-27

The teaching continued and cannot be denied. For example, St Justin Martyr wrote in 167 ADS:

"This food we call the Eucharist, of which no one is allowed to partake except one who believes that the things we teach are true, and has received the washing for forgiveness of sins and for rebirth, and who lives as Christ handed down to us. For we do not receive these things as common bread or common drink; but as Jesus Christ our Savior being incarnate by God's Word took flesh and blood for our salvation, so also we have been taught that the food consecrated by the Word of prayer which comes from him, from which our flesh and blood are nourished by transformation, is the flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus."

Do we truly believe that when we come forward at Holy Mass on Sunday, the Lords Day (or perhaps more often) and partake of Holy Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ? If so, what does that mean for how we live our lives every other day of the week?



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 20, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Saturday, April 20th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 9:31-42

31 The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up and living in the fear of the Lord; encouraged by the Holy Spirit, they continued to grow.

32 It happened that Peter visited one place after another and eventually came to God's holy people living down in Lydda.

33 There he found a man called Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years.

34 Peter said to him, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ cures you: get up and make your bed.' Aeneas got up immediately;

35 everybody who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they were converted to the Lord.

36 At Jaffa there was a disciple called Tabitha, or in Greek, Dorcas, who never tired of doing good or giving to those in need.

37 But it happened that at this time she became ill and died, and they washed her and laid her out in an upper room.

38 Lydda is not far from Jaffa, so when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to urge him, 'Come to us without delay.'

39 Peter went back with them immediately, and on his arrival they took him to the upper room, where all the widows stood round him in tears, showing him tunics and other clothes Dorcas had made when she was with them.

40 Peter sent everyone out of the room and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the dead woman and said, 'Tabitha, stand up.' She opened her eyes, looked at Peter and sat up.

41 Peter helped her to her feet, then he called in the members of the congregation and widows and showed them she was alive.

42 The whole of Jaffa heard about it and many believed in the Lord.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17

12 What return can I make to Yahweh for his generosity to me?

13 I shall take up the cup of salvation and call on the name of Yahweh.

14 I shall fulfil my vows to Yahweh, witnessed by all his people.

15 Costly in Yahweh's sight is the death of his faithful.

16 I beg you, Yahweh! I am your servant, I am your servant and my mother was your servant; you have undone my fetters.

17 I shall offer you a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of Yahweh.

Gospel, John 6:60-69

60 After hearing it, many of his followers said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?'

61 Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this disturb you?'

62 What if you should see the Son of man ascend to where he was before?'

63 '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.'

64 '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.

65 He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me except by the gift of the Father.'

66 After this, many of his disciples went away and accompanied him no more.

67 Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?'

68 Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life,

69 and we believe; we have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 20, 2024

1. "The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up and living in the fear of the Lord; encouraged by the Holy Spirit, they continued to grow." These words began our first reading for today's Holy Mass. Once again, these readings from the Acts of the Apostles reflect the early Church, AFTER the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Notice, Peter is being used by the Holy Spirit to continue the presence of miracles, the signs of the kingdom, which occurred in the Public ministry of Jesus. This is what the Lord promised. In this reading, we see the healing of a paralytic and the raising from the dead of a young woman named Tabitha or Dorcas in Greek.

Every year, the celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost is an invitation to each one of us to have the very same encounter. It is the Holy Spirit which makes it possible for us to live lives of sacrificial love, holiness and service in a world that God still loves - a world into which He still sends His Son, through the Body of Christ, the Church - of which we are all members. As we move forward in this Easter Season and toward Pentecost, let us ask for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the whole church.

We are, in this millennium, commissioned to carry forward the very same mission of those first disciples who gathered with Mary the Mother of the Lord. Jesus promised his followers, "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)
That includes you and me! Ask for the Lord to pour out His Holy Spirit on you, your family, indeed the whole Church!

2. The Psalmist pledges "I shall fulfil my vows to the Lord"

What are the vows, the promises, we have made to the Lord?

It begins with our Baptismal promises. It includes the recitation of the Creed. For those who are married in Christ, it includes the marriage vows we made to our spouse, to love them in a way that manifests Christ's love for His Bride, the Church. For those who are living a life of consecrated Christian celibacy, it means forsaking one spouse to be free to love the whole Church and become a sign of the life to come where there will be no marriage because we are all married to the Lord, and joined to Him in an eternal communion.

Are we fulfilling all of these vows, these promises? If not, we need to repent and ask the Lord for the grace to do so.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. In our Gospel text appointed for today, Jesus has just finished his extensive, beautiful but deeply challenging, discourse explaining that HE is the Bread of Life. In that teaching He told them, and He tells us: "He who eats my body and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caper'na-um." (John 6:53-59)

Many of his disciples left Him. Would we have been numbered among them?

In their statement on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the Bishops of the United States wrote:

"Recalling these words of Jesus, the Catholic Church professes that, in the celebration of the Eucharist, bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and the instrumentality of the priest...The whole Christ is truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine—the glorified Christ who rose from the dead after dying for our sins. This is what the Church means when she speaks of the "Real Presence" of Christ in the Eucharist. This presence of Christ in the Eucharist is called "real" not to exclude other types of his presence as if they could not be understood as real (cf. Catechism, no. 1374). The risen Christ is present to his Church in many ways, but most especially through the sacrament of his Body and Blood."

Listen to the clear teaching of the Catholic Catechism, citing the teaching of the early Fathers:

"It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament. The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion. Thus St. John Chrysostom declares:

"It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God's. This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.

"And St. Ambrose says about this conversion:

"Be convinced that this is not what nature has formed, but what the blessing has consecrated. The power of the blessing prevails over that of nature, because by the blessing nature itself is changed..."

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature." (CCC #1374,1375)

Do we really believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist? Or, have we figuratively joined those who left Jesus in this Gospel text?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 21, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Sunday, April 21st, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 4:8-12

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, addressed them, 'Rulers of the people, and elders!

9 If you are questioning us today about an act of kindness to a cripple and asking us how he was healed,

10 you must know, all of you, and the whole people of Israel, that it is by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, and God raised from the dead, by this name and by no other that this man stands before you cured.

11 This is the stone which you, the builders, rejected but which has become the cornerstone. Only in him is there salvation;

12 for of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 21, 29

1 Alleluia! Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good, for his faithful love endures for ever.

8 It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to rely on human beings;

9 better to take refuge in Yahweh than to rely on princes.

21 I thank you for hearing me, and making yourself my Saviour.

22 The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;

23 This is Yahweh's doing, and we marvel at it.

26 Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming! We bless you from the house of Yahweh.

29 Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good, for his faithful love endures for ever.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Reading 2, First John 3:1-2

1 You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children -- which is what we are! The reason why the world does not acknowledge us is that it did not acknowledge him.

2 My dear friends, we are already God's children, but what we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed. We are well aware that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is.

Gospel, John 10:11-18

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.

12 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;

13 he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me,

15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep.

16 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.

17 The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

18 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 21, 2024

1. In our first reading for this Fourth Sunday of Easter, we heard a portion of the powerful sermon which the Apostle Peter preached after spending a night in jail with John. They were imprisoned because they taught in the temple that Jesus had been raised from the dead. So, the first thing Peter does upon his release from jail was to boldly address the Sanhedrin.

After hearing of the healing of a man lame from birth and the message Peter gave in the temple which led to his arrest, they asked him "By what power or by what name did you do this?" and Peter, whom the scripture says was "filled with the Spirit", spoke this message.

He told them that the stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone. That is Jesus. He is the cornerstone, the stone upon which the whole building rests and the stone to which the whole building is oriented.

This Holy Boldness of Peter and John was because of the power of the Holy Spirit at work in and through them. Jesus had promised they would receive such power, and they did. We did as well, at our Baptism and in our reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. As we continue this Easter season and approach the celebration of the first Pentecost, we need to ask the Lord to fill us afresh with the Holy Spirit and to give us the boldness to preach, teach and live the Gospel in its fullness, as faithful Catholic Christians. We are called into a new missionary age of the Church.

2. Our second reading is a beautiful excerpt from the first letter of the Apostle John written to all the early churches. In this chapter, St. John is instructing the early Christians - as well as each one of us - on how to live as God's children in this world. And, how to do so in a way which also helps the children of this world to encounter the Lord and be brought into the Church. He is reminding us all that we are God's children and what we will become, as we cooperate with grace, will be fully revealed when we are with the Lord. We shall be like Him. Like whom? Like Jesus, the cornerstone and the first born of the new creation.

3. Our Gospel text for this Fourth Sunday of Easter is the beautiful teaching of Jesus that He is the Good Shepherd who lays down his Life for the Sheep. We are His sheep. The wolf is the evil one and his minions. They have no love for the sheep but rather seek to devour them.

A little earlier in this chapter Jesus tells his disciples, and always remember, anything taught to the disciples includes you and me, that he is the gate into the sheepfold. We entered the sheepfold at our Baptism.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Jesus knows us and calls us each by name. Do we believe this? We should, it is true. Easter is a great time for each one of us to draw closer to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. This is the time to choose to make Him the very center of our lives.

We are God's children; we are the sheep of His flock.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 22, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Monday, April 22nd, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 11:1-18

1 The apostles and the brothers in Judaea heard that gentiles too had accepted the word of God,

2 and when Peter came up to Jerusalem the circumcised believers protested to him

3 and said, 'So you have been visiting the uncircumcised and eating with them!'

4 Peter in reply gave them the details point by point,

5 'One day, when I was in the town of Jaffa,' he began, 'I fell into a trance as I was praying and had a vision of something like a big sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners. This sheet came right down beside me.

6 I looked carefully into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of heaven.

7 Then I heard a voice that said to me, "Now, Peter, kill and eat!"

8 But I answered, "Certainly not, Lord; nothing profane or unclean has ever crossed my lips."

9 And a second time the voice spoke from heaven, "What God has made clean, you have no right to call profane."

10 This was repeated three times, before the whole of it was drawn up to heaven again.

11 'Just at that moment, three men stopped outside the house where we were staying; they had been sent from Caesarea to fetch me,

12 and the Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going back with them. The six brothers here came with me as well, and we entered the man's house.

13 He told us he had seen an angel standing in his house who said, "Send to Jaffa and fetch Simon known as Peter;

14 he has a message for you that will save you and your entire household."

15 'I had scarcely begun to speak when the Holy Spirit came down on them in the same way as it came on us at the beginning,



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

16 and I remembered that the Lord had said, "John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

17 I realised then that God was giving them the identical gift he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; and who was I to stand in God's way?'

18 This account satisfied them, and they gave glory to God, saying, 'God has clearly granted to the gentiles too the repentance that leads to life.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 42:2-3; 43:3, 4

2 I thirst for God, the living God; when shall I go to see the face of God?

3 I have no food but tears day and night, as all day long I am taunted, 'Where is your God?'

3 Send out your light and your truth; they shall be my guide, to lead me to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell.

4 Then I shall go to the altar of God, to the God of my joy. I will rejoice and praise you on the harp, O God, my God.

Gospel, John 10:1-10

1 '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.

2 He who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock;

3 the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out.

4 When he has brought out all those that are his, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice.

5 They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him because they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

6 Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he was saying to them.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

7 So Jesus spoke to them again: In all truth I tell you, I am the gate of the sheepfold.

8 All who have come before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep took no notice of them.

9 I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: such a one will go in and out and will find pasture.

10 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.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 22, 2024

1. The early followers of Jesus were faithful Jews or converts to Judaism. Before they were called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) the early followers of Jesus Christ were often referred to as “the Way”. The Apostle Paul, in recounting his own conversion, speaks of having persecuted “this Way” (Acts 22: 3-16) prior to his encounter with the Risen Lord on the Road to Damascus.

This expression “the Way” reveals a profoundly important aspect of the understanding of the early Christians. They believed and proclaimed that following Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, meant a new way of living. But it was a Jewish Way, with following all of the dictates of the Mosaic Law. Now, they are hearing reports that the gentiles, those who were not Jews, were accepting the Word of God and being converted to the Lord and Baptized.

And, Peter, already viewed as the Chief of the Apostles, was visiting with them, and sharing meals with them... Some objected, insisting that these gentile followers would first have to be circumcised and follow the Mosaic Law in every detail, including the dietary laws.

In this profoundly important passage from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter explains his encounter with the Holy Spirit and his vision, which clearly called into question the obligations of the Old Law and the dietary restrictions. Also, he explained that the same Holy Spirit which descended upon them at Pentecost was being poured out on the Gentiles! Then, he places the encounter within the promise Jesus made to them, Peter said:

"I remembered that the Lord had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

I realized then that God was giving them the identical gift he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; and who was I to stand in God's way?'

This account satisfied them, and they gave glory to God, saying, 'God has clearly granted to the gentiles too the repentance that leads to life.'

The same Holy Spirit is being poured out today, on the Church and in and through the Church.

The Church is the Body of Christ, called to go into all the world and continue preaching His Good News. Do we experience the power of the Holy Spirit in our own lives? Do we pray to the Holy Spirit? Do we ask for the Holy Spirit to speak to us and guide us? We Can. We should. COME HOLY SPIRIT AND FILL THE HEARTS OF YOUR FAITHFUL...

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

2. The beautiful words of the Psalm of David which is our response at today's Holy Mass were pronounced for centuries at the beginning of every Holy Mass, at the foot of the High Altar. In Latin

Introibo ad altare dei, the priest would say
The servers would respond:
Ad Deum qui Laetificat juventutem meam

In English: I will go unto the altar of the Lord, the Lord of my joy and gladness.

Is the Lord the source of our joy and gladness? Do we experience joy and gladness?

Remember, the word translated Gospel in English literally means Good News. Are we living in a way which gives testimony to the fact that living for Jesus Christ brings joy?

St. Paul, a man who was certainly well acquainted with difficulty and suffering, told the early Christians - and tells us - " Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thes.5: 16 - 24) Did he mean it?

Yes, he did. This was a man who understood that the Gospel really is Good news! And, that those who know Jesus Christ can experience true joy.

Do we? A priest friend of mine, many years ago, told me to see JOY as an acronym. J. O. Y. That stands for Jesus Over You. That, he said, is the way to experiencing Christian Joy.

3. The imagery of the Shepherd, the sheep and the gate or door of entry was very familiar to the disciples. It was a favorite theme of the Prophets of the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures. The Holy Spirit, through the Prophet Ezekiel promised that the false shepherds would be removed, that He Himself was the Good Shepherd, and that He would raise up one Shepherd, from David, who would shepherd His sheep (Ez 34)

In this powerful instruction, which is our Gospel lesson for today's Mass, Jesus is telling those who heard His words that day - He is the fulfillment of that promise. He is the Messiah. But, at first, some did not understand. So, He clarifies it.

Hear His words:

"In all truth I tell you, I am the gate of the sheepfold.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

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."

He is speaking to us as well. Do we believe this? Have we invited Jesus the Good Shepherd, to lead us, to lead our family? He has come to bring life, to the full. Receive Him, enter through the Gate.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 23, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 23rd, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 11:19-26

19 Those who had scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, but they proclaimed the message only to Jews.

20 Some of them, however, who came from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch where they started preaching also to the Greeks, proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus to them.

21 The Lord helped them, and a great number believed and were converted to the Lord.

22 The news of them came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas out to Antioch.

23 There he was glad to see for himself that God had given grace, and he urged them all to remain faithful to the Lord with heartfelt devotion;

24 for he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. And a large number of people were won over to the Lord.

25 Barnabas then left for Tarsus to look for Saul,

26 and when he found him he brought him to Antioch. And it happened that they stayed together in that church a whole year, instructing a large number of people. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians'.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 87:1-3, 4-5, 6-7

1 [Of the sons of Korah Psalm Song] With its foundations on the holy mountains,

2 Yahweh loves his city, he prefers the gates of Zion to any dwelling-place in Jacob.

3 He speaks of glory for you, city of God,

4 'I number Rahab and Babylon among those that acknowledge me; look at Tyre, Philistia, Ethiopia, so and so was born there.'

5 But of Zion it will be said, 'Every one was born there,' her guarantee is the Most High.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

6 Yahweh in his register of peoples will note against each, 'Born there',

7 princes no less than native-born; all make their home in you.

Gospel, John 10:22-30

22 It was the time of the feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter,

23 and Jesus was in the Temple walking up and down in the Portico of Solomon.

24 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.'

25 Jesus replied: I have told you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name are my witness;

26 but you do not believe, because you are no sheep of mine.

27 The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.

28 I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from my hand.

29 The Father, for what he has given me, is greater than anyone, and no one can steal anything from the Father's hand.

30 The Father and I are one.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 23, 2024

1. As we continue in the Easter Season, moving toward the great Feast of Pentecost, we continue in our first reading to hear of the spread of the Church. Barnabas was sent to Antioch. When he arrived, he saw the power of the Holy Spirit had proceeded him. Even though there was a great persecution which followed the Martyrdom of the Deacon Saint Stephen, and the believers were dispersed, they had certainly not stopped preaching the Gospel and showing forth the signs of the Kingdom of God, through the signs and wonders which Jesus had promised would continue.

In Antioch, Gentiles (non-Jews) were turning to the Lord, in great number. Up till this moment, most of the early Church were faithful Jews who followed Jesus as the promised Messiah. They were called "The Way" by other Jews. Now, with gentiles choosing to follow Jesus and to be baptized, they are called "Christians" (followers of the Christ) for the first time.

So, before they were called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) the early followers of Jesus Christ were often referred to as "the Way". The Apostle Paul, in recounting his own conversion, speaks of having persecuted "this Way" (Acts 22: 3-16) prior to his encounter with the Risen Lord on the Road to Damascus. This expression "the Way" reveals a profoundly important aspect of the understanding of the early Christians. They believed and proclaimed that the Christian faith was to be expressed in a new way of living.

It still is. Are we living our Christian life coherently? Do we separate out our daily life into "compartments" like "the religious stuff"...and then everything else? That is NOT what it means to be a Christian. Our faith is meant to inform the very Way we live, just like it did the early Church.

2. The Psalmist David always provides us with a vital reminder, that we live in the Lord. We Christians are, in a sense, the New Zion. The Lord lives in our midst, in the Church, His mystical Body, of which we are members. Upon our Baptism, the Church becomes our home, our mother, the place in which we now live our lives in Christ. The early Church Fathers were of one mind concerning this truth. Here are a few short quotes which are representative of many, many more:

"Let us love the Lord our God; let us love His Church...Let us love Him as our Father and her as our mother" (St. Augustine) "No one can have God as his Father who does not have the Church as his Mother" (St. Cyprian). "For where the Church is, there the Spirit of God is also; and where the Spirit of God is, there the Church is, and all grace. And the Spirit is truth" (St. Irenaeus of Lyons) How do we understand our membership in the Church?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. In the Gospel appointed for today, we read what happened right after Jesus concluded his teaching wherein, he explained that He Himself was the Good Shepherd. In the verses just before the excerpt we heard proclaimed today we read these words:

"There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, "He has a demon, and he is mad; why listen to him?" Others said, "These are not the sayings of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

So, they ask Him directly.

"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."

So, we are asked today, by the Gospel, who is Jesus to us? Is He OUR Messiah? Is He Our Lord? Is He Our Good Shepherd? Do we hear His Voice? Do we really follow Him?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 24, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 24th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 12:24--13:5

24 The word of God continued to spread and to gain followers.

25 Barnabas and Saul completed their task at Jerusalem and came back, bringing John Mark with them.

1 In the church at Antioch the following were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 One day while they were offering worship to the Lord and keeping a fast, the Holy Spirit said, 'I want Barnabas and Saul set apart for the work to which I have called them.'

3 So it was that after fasting and prayer they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

4 So these two, sent on their mission by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there set sail for Cyprus.

5 They landed at Salamis and proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; John acted as their assistant.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

2 Then the earth will acknowledge your ways, and all nations your power to save.

3 Let the nations praise you, God, let all the nations praise you.

5 Let the nations praise you, God, let all the nations praise you.

6 The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God has blessed us.

Gospel, John 12:44-50

44 Jesus declared publicly: Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in the one who sent me,

45 and whoever sees me, sees the one who sent me.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

46 I have come into the world as light, to prevent anyone who believes in me from staying in the dark any more.

47 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:

48 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.

49 For I have not spoken of my own accord; but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and what to speak,

50 and I know that his commands mean eternal life. And therefore what the Father has told me is what I speak.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 24, 2024

1. As we continue to hear these readings from the Acts of the Apostles in our fifty-day observance of Easter, this account of the early Church written by St. Luke, is filled with these references to how the Holy Spirit moved powerfully. We witness the Holy Spirit forming the Church and working through the Church in powerful ways. In today's reading, we hear this account:

"The Holy Spirit said, 'I want Barnabas and Saul set apart for the work to which I have called them. 'So it was that after fasting and prayer they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So, these two, sent on their mission by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there set sail for Cyprus."

Does the Holy Spirit continue to speak to and through the Church? The answer is YES!

An examination of the teaching of Jesus and the New Testament reveals the essential role of the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of the Church - and in the life and mission of every individual believer. A study of the Tradition, the magisterial teachings of the Church and the Catholic Catechism underscores that this reality is meant to continue. It was not a onetime event.

We will soon commemorate the Holy Spirit falling on the Church on the Feast of Pentecost. The purpose of Pentecost was - and still is - the empowering of the Christian Church, with the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead! The Holy Spirit draws us into communion with the Lord and a participation in His Divine Life and mission. That communion is lived in the Church. The Catholic Catechism, quoting St Augustine, affirms "What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church." (CCC # 797)

Do we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit? Do we ask the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us?

2. The Psalmist regularly reminds us that every Nation is called to acknowledge, praise and obey God. Yet, we see something quite different in our time. Nations which once acknowledged the sovereignty of God, have turned away from any such profession. And, sadly, we see the results. When a Nation forgets God, they lose their way. Indeed, they have lost their soul.

As Christians, we are called to be the soul of the world. There is an ancient Christian manuscript entitled "The Letter to Diognetus" which most historians date back to between 65 and 125AD. It contained an insight concerning the relationship of Christians to the world which, though seemingly simple, is the key to understanding the heart of the matter.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The letter was an "apology," which means a defense of the early Christian faith and lifestyle. One of the lines in that letter says:

In a word, what the soul is in a body, the Christians are in the world...." Christians are still called to be the "Soul of the World" in our age. Are we taking our place in helping to turn our own Nation back to God, calling the leaders to join the Psalmists song of praise? "Let the nations praise you, God, let all the nations praise you."

3. In our Gospel text appointed for today, Jesus has just finished his extensive, beautiful but deeply challenging, discourse explaining that HE is the Bread of Life. In that teaching He told them, and He tells us: "He who eats my body and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This in the Gospel text appointed for today's Holy Mass we hear these words spoken publicly by Jesus: "I have come into the world as light, to prevent anyone who believes in me from staying in the dark anymore." In the early Church, when a man or woman was baptized, after a protracted period of study, they were said to be "enlightened"

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, citing two early Fathers of the Church, Justin Martyr and Gregory Nazianzus, teaches concerning Baptism:

"This bath is called enlightenment, because those who receive this [catechetical] instruction are enlightened in their understanding . . ." Having received in Baptism the Word, "the true light that enlightens every man," the person baptized has been "enlightened," he becomes a "son of light," indeed, he becomes "light" himself:

"Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift. . . . We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called gift because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; grace since it is given even to the guilty; Baptism because sin is buried in the water; anointing for it is priestly and royal as are those who are anointed; enlightenment because it radiates light; clothing since it veils our shame; bath because it washes; and seal as it is our guard and the sign of God's Lordship." (CCC #1216)

For most of us, we were Baptized as children. Entering into the full grace the Sacrament conferred upon us is a process which continues throughout our Christian Life. It is the gateway sacrament, leading us to receive the other two sacraments of initiation, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist and to continue on in the Christian life, growing in holiness by cooperating with Grace.

We need to ask the Lord to be our Light! To study His word, pray, participate in the Sacraments, and let the Light of Jesus Christ enlighten our whole way of thinking and living. Have we done that today?



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 25, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Thursday, April 25th, 2024

Reading 1, First Peter 5:5-14

5 In the same way, younger people, be subject to the elders. Humility towards one another must be the garment you all wear constantly, because God opposes the proud but accords his favour to the humble.

6 Bow down, then, before the power of God now, so that he may raise you up in due time;

7 unload all your burden on to him, since he is concerned about you.

8 Keep sober and alert, because your enemy the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

9 Stand up to him, strong in faith and in the knowledge that it is the same kind of suffering that the community of your brothers throughout the world is undergoing.

10 You will have to suffer only for a little while: the God of all grace who called you to eternal glory in Christ will restore you, he will confirm, strengthen and support you.

11 His power lasts for ever and ever. Amen.

12 I write these few words to you through Silvanus, who is a trustworthy brother, to encourage you and attest that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!

13 Your sister in Babylon, who is with you among the chosen, sends you greetings; so does my son, Mark.

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17

2 for you have said: love is built to last for ever, you have fixed your constancy firm in the heavens.

3 'I have made a covenant with my Chosen One, sworn an oath to my servant David:

6 Who in the skies can compare with Yahweh? Who among the sons of god can rival him?

7 God, awesome in the assembly of holy ones, great and dreaded among all who surround him,

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

16 In your name they rejoice all day long, by your saving justice they are raised up.

17 You are the flower of their strength, by your favour our strength is triumphant;

Gospel, Mark 16:15-20

15 And he said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation.

16 Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned.

17 These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues;

18 they will pick up snakes in their hands and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

19 And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven; there at the right hand of God he took his place,

20 while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 25, 2024

1. The Apostle Peter writes his letters to Christians who were already dispersed as a result of growing persecution of the early church. In this excerpt we hear of the Way of life which was present in the early Christian communities. It was relational, centered in the Risen Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, ordered and formed as a pattern of living which was recognizable and distinctive.

Before they were called Christians, the early community of those who followed Jesus were called "The Way". Christianity is a whole New Way of living, in, with and for Jesus Christ. The Apostle encourages respect for elders, humility and the acceptance of suffering out of love for the Lord. He also instructs the early believers about the necessity of spiritual warfare.

Christianity is still a Way of Living. It is not about Me AND Jesus. Rather, it is about Me IN Jesus, and IN Jesus, with others, for the sake of the world. the redemptive mission of Jesus continues now through the Church, which is His Body.

Do we understand this? Do we live it?

2. "God, awesome in the assembly of holy ones, great and dreaded among all who surround him, In your name they rejoice all day long, by your saving justice they are raised up. You are the flower of their strength, by your favor our strength is triumphant;"

The Psalmist David sings His song of praise and we are invited to sing it along with him. In fact, this continual praise of God is a source of spiritual strength and vitality. Do we cultivate a lifestyle of prayer and praise?

3. The Gospel appointed for this day in the Octave of Easter offers us what has often been called "The Great Commission". Jesus calling the disciples to continue His mission after He ascends to the Father. In fact, it will be He who will work through them. Notice, He makes it clear that the signs of the Kingdom will continue through the Church. And, they have continued for over two millennia.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains:

"Christ sent his apostles so that "repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations."⁴¹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The mission to baptize, and so the sacramental mission, is implied in the mission to evangelize, because the sacrament is prepared for by the word of God and by the faith which is assent to this word:



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The People of God is formed into one in the first place by the Word of the living God... The preaching of the Word is required for the sacramental ministry itself, since the sacraments are sacraments of faith, drawing their origin and nourishment from the Word.

"The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the Body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs, they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it. That is why they are called 'sacraments of faith.' (CCC #1122, 1123)

Do we hear the words of Jesus for our own lives? Do we know that we are called to share and live the Gospel in our daily life? Do we believe in the power of prayer? Do we exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to us?

We can. We should. Otherwise, the Great Commission will become a Great Omission.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 26, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Friday, April 26th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 13:26-33

26 'My brothers, sons of Abraham's race, and all you godfearers, this message of salvation is meant for you.

27 What the people of Jerusalem and their rulers did, though they did not realise it, was in fact to fulfil the prophecies read on every Sabbath.

28 Though they found nothing to justify his execution, they condemned him and asked Pilate to have him put to death.

29 When they had carried out everything that scripture foretells about him they took him down from the tree and buried him in a tomb.

30 But God raised him from the dead,

31 and for many days he appeared to those who had accompanied him from Galilee to Jerusalem: and it is these same companions of his who are now his witnesses before our people.

32 'We have come here to tell you the good news that the promise made to our ancestors has come about.

33 God has fulfilled it to their children by raising Jesus from the dead. As scripture says in the psalms: You are my son: today I have fathered you.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11

6 'I myself have anointed my king on Zion my holy mountain.'

7 I will proclaim the decree of Yahweh: He said to me, 'You are my son, today have I fathered you.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give you the nations as your birthright, the whole wide world as your possession.

9 With an iron sceptre you will break them, shatter them like so many pots.'

10 So now, you kings, come to your senses, you earthly rulers, learn your lesson!

11 In fear be submissive to Yahweh;

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 14:1-6

1 Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me.

2 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,

3 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.

4 You know the way to the place where I am going.

5 Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'

6 Jesus said: I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 26, 2024

1. In our first reading appointed for today's Holy Mass, as we continue in the Easter season, we keep listening to the Apostle Paul's sermon in the Synagogue. Notice how he begins, "My brothers, sons of Abraham's race, and all you god fearers, this message of salvation is meant for you.

What the people of Jerusalem and their rulers did, though they did not realize it, was in fact to fulfil the prophecies read on every Sabbath."

Paul's goal is to win the listeners over, so that they open their hearts to receive the Gospel, and encounter Jesus Christ in the same way that he did on his way to Damascus. This is the heart of true evangelization, to point the listeners to Jesus Christ.

In his first letter to the Corinthians the Apostle expresses this foundational principle of evangelization in these words, " To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law I became as one under the law—though not being myself under the law—that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law—not being without law toward God but under the law of Christ—that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings." (1 Cor 9:20-23)

How do we view our duty to share the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, with those in our own life? Do we even do so? If the early Christian believers had not shared the Gospel, none of us would even be listening to these readings today. What about future generations? Will we respond to the call to share the Gospel given to every one of us at our Baptism?

2. The Psalmist David is used repeatedly as a prophetic messenger of the Holy Spirit. Notice in the sermons recorded for us in the Acts of the Apostles, how often the Psalms are quoted by the Apostles as they present Jesus Christ to everyone who will listen.

So, in the excerpt we have in today's Responsorial Psalm, Psalm 2, we hear these words "You are my son, today have I fathered you..." Or, in another translation "Today I have begotten you?"

Who is speaking? To whom are these words being addressed?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

In the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews, the author makes it clear, quoting these very words: "So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten you" (Hebrews 5:5)

These words are spoken by the Father to His Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is speaking prophetically through David. As we read the Psalms as Christian, we need to keep in mind a principle of Biblical interpretation. The seeds of the New Testament are present in the Old and the seeds of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New. Read and Pray the Psalms the way the early Church did, and they will come alive.

3. Jesus gives these consoling and hope filled words to His beloved disciples, immediately after His sad words to Peter, given after Peter said he would lay down his life for him. Jesus tells Peter that before the cock crows, he will deny him three times (John 13:38) And, indeed, that is exactly what happened. Yet, even knowing the weakness which will be exhibited by Peter, and the others, Jesus still uses them as His instruments to continue His redemptive mission after He ascends to the father.

He also promises them and us that He has prepared a place for them in the eternal communion of love called Heaven. Thomas is once again used as a wonderful teaching tool by the Master. His innocent comment, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" prompts these beautiful words from the Master:

"I am the Way;
I am Truth and Life.
No one can come to the Father except through me."

Jesus is still the Way, the Truth and the Life". For each one of us. For every man, woman and child on the face of the earth. We celebrate Easter for fifty days. At its end, we celebrate the next great Feast, the Feast of Pentecost. Alleluias will permeate our worship - but they are also meant to inform our lives. That is because, in those often-quoted words of the great western Church Bishop, Augustine, "we are an Easter people and alleluia is our song."

Everything really is different because that Tomb is empty. We are different because we have been raised up with Christ. (Col.3) When we cooperate with grace, we can begin to live this difference in a new lifestyle.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 27, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Saturday, April 27th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 13:44-52

44 The next Sabbath almost the whole town assembled to hear the word of God.

45 When they saw the crowds, the Jews, filled with jealousy, used blasphemies to contradict everything Paul said.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out fearlessly. 'We had to proclaim the word of God to you first, but since you have rejected it, since you do not think yourselves worthy of eternal life, here and now we turn to the gentiles.

47 For this is what the Lord commanded us to do when he said: I have made you a light to the nations, so that my salvation may reach the remotest parts of the earth.'

48 It made the gentiles very happy to hear this and they gave thanks to the Lord for his message; all who were destined for eternal life became believers.

49 Thus the word of the Lord spread through the whole countryside.

50 But the Jews worked on some of the devout women of the upper classes and the leading men of the city; they stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their territory.

51 So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went off to Iconium; but the converts were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

1 [Psalm] Sing a new song to Yahweh, for he has performed wonders, his saving power is in his right hand and his holy arm.

2 Yahweh has made known his saving power, revealed his saving justice for the nations to see,

3 mindful of his faithful love and his constancy to the House of Israel. The whole wide world has seen the saving power of our God.

4 Acclaim Yahweh, all the earth, burst into shouts of joy!



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Gospel, John 14:7-14

7 If you know me, you will know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.

8 Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and then we shall be satisfied.' Jesus said to him,

9 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father, so how can you say, "Show us the Father"?

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? What I say to you I do not speak of my own accord: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his works.

11 You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe it on the evidence of these works.

12 In all truth I tell you, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, and will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.

13 Whatever you ask in my name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 27, 2024

1. Notice the courage demonstrated by Paul and Barnabas. As they continue their missionary work, preaching and teaching in the name of Jesus, they are not always well received. After all, Jesus had made it clear to the Apostles, they would be persecuted, even as the Lord Himself was persecuted. In John's Gospel we read these words of the Lord:

"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant[d] is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; (John 15:20) And, indeed they did. To the point, for some, of the shedding of their blood. But they did not stop. They knew they were obligated to share the Good news. In a letter he would later write to the Corinthians Paul explains: "For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16b)

Jesus also instructed the Apostles, after commissioning them and sending them out to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, "And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town." (Matt 10:14) Paul and Barnabas knew this, and they did just that.

When we face opposition for sharing and living our Catholic Christian faith, how do we respond? Do we stay faithful, do we exhibit Christian courage, or do we give up? Notice, the converts, those who received the words of God, were "filled with Joy". So were Paul and Barnabas. The Goodness of the News we proclaim to the whole world does not change. And we proclaim that Good news in word and lifestyle. Our circumstances simply present us with an invitation as to how we will respond to them. Living faith gives us the means.

Christian Joy finds its root in the relationship we now have in and through Jesus Christ, with the Father, in the Holy Spirit. That relationship not only survives struggle, it thrives in struggle. That is, for those who have living faith.

2. Our Responsorial Psalm continues this theme of joy, challenging us to "Sing a new song to Yahweh, for he has performed wonders, his saving power is in his right hand and his holy arm." And, David continues, "Acclaim Yahweh, all the earth, burst into shouts of joy!"

St. Paul writes to the Galatians about the fruits of the Holy Spirit. They are set forth in chapter five of this wonderful letter in the New Testament, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." (Gal. 5:22,23) Fruit is cultivated, it grows over time when we cooperate with God's grace.

Joy is a fruit of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer. It is meant to be reflected in a new way of living. It reveals the character of Christ being formed in a believer. It does not mean

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

smiling all the time - though for many of us a bit more smiling would be a good idea. Rather, Christian joy, Gospel Joy, means living as though we know that Jesus never leaves us. He meant it when he said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Mt. 28:20)

Are we JOYFUL? Do we cultivate the fruit of joy?

3. Jesus continues his beautiful discourse in the Gospel appointed for today, encouraging the disciples, and encouraging us. After all, we are His Disciples in this age. And remember, His words are eternal, they are still being spoken by Him to all who have ears to hear. He tells them, He tells us, that He and the Father are One. To see Him is to see the Father. This is a direct teaching on the unity of the Father, Son in and through and with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity. One God, in three divine persons. The Central Mystery of the Christian Faith.

The Catholic Catechism states it with crystal clarity and authority: "The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the "hierarchy of the truths of faith". The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, reveals himself to men "and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin."

In this Gospel, Jesus He is telling them, and He is telling us, that we are invited into the very Trinitarian communion, through our Baptism into Him. We become sons and daughters in the Son. This is called divine filiation. His Father is now Our Father. And, He promises them, and us, that when we pray in His Name, the Father will answer our prayers.

He is the Only Son of the Father. But, in Him, we are adopted Sons and Daughters. St Paul wrote to the Ephesians:

"He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will. (Eph 1:5) In His letter to the Galatians He explains that Jesus came to "redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. (Galatians 4:5-7)

We really are, right now, adopted sons and daughters of God the Father, through His Son Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. And we stand in Jesus. We are identified with Him. That is what it means to pray in His name.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

In the Bible, to name someone conferred a special relationship of identification and purpose. When we pray and live our lives in the name of Jesus, we stand in that privileged relationship and have a special place in His mission. There is no place more secure, precious, powerful or profound. We live our lives now in Him, by living in His Body, the Church, of which we are members through Baptism.

He lives His life now in us and continues His saving mission through us. This relationship is at the heart of the Church. He is identified with us, and we are identified with Him, at the name of Jesus all of life can be transformed.

In the name of Jesus all the promises of God find their fulfillment and response. He is the answer to every human question, the fulfillment of every authentic human need, the balm of healing for every human wound, the satisfaction of every authentic human desire, and the way to authentic human freedom and flourishing. Do we pray and live, in the Name of Jesus?



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 28, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Sunday, April 28th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 9:26-31

26 When he got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple.

27 Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to him and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached fearlessly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28 Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord.

29 But after he had spoken to the Hellenists and argued with them, they became determined to kill him.

30 When the brothers got to know of this, they took him to Caesarea and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

31 The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up and living in the fear of the Lord; encouraged by the Holy Spirit, they continued to grow.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32

26 The poor will eat and be filled, those who seek Yahweh will praise him, 'May your heart live for ever.'

27 The whole wide world will remember and return to Yahweh, all the families of nations bow down before him.

28 For to Yahweh, ruler of the nations, belongs kingly power!

30 their descendants will serve him, will proclaim his name to generations

31 still to come; and these will tell of his saving justice to a people yet unborn: he has fulfilled it.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Reading 2, First John 3:18-24

18 Children, our love must be not just words or mere talk, but something active and genuine.

19 This will be the proof that we belong to the truth, and it will convince us in his presence,

20 even if our own feelings condemn us, that God is greater than our feelings and knows all things.

21 My dear friends, if our own feelings do not condemn us, we can be fearless before God,

22 and whatever we ask we shall receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what is acceptable to him.

23 His commandment is this, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we should love one another as he commanded us.

24 Whoever keeps his commandments remains in God, and God in him. And this is the proof that he remains in us: the Spirit that he has given us.

Gospel, John 15:1-8

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

2 Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more.

3 You are clean already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you.

4 Remain in me, as I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, unless it remains part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me.

5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing.

6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a branch -- and withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire and are burnt.

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for whatever you please and you will get it.

8 It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit and be my disciples.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 28, 2024

1. In our first reading on this Fifth Sunday of Easter, we continue in the Acts of the Apostles, the historic account of the early Church. Chapter nine tells the story of the wonderful conversion of Saul, the Rabbi who was persecuting the early Christians. He stood by at the martyrdom of the Deacon, St. Stephen. As is often the case, his name was changed to reflect that conversion and he becomes Paul, the soon to be great Apostle to the Gentiles.

He arrives in Jerusalem and shares his wonderful testimony of encountering the Risen Lord on the way to Damascus. Barnabas and some of the disciples protected him from some who sought to kill him. Others were afraid of him. Barnabas brought him to the Apostles. The conversion of St. Paul is an example of the power of the Holy Spirit to totally transform men and women. He would later write to the Corinthians "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...all things of old are passed away. Behold all things become new" (2 Cor. 5:17ff)

That includes you and me and all who call on the Lord. When we repent, turn away from sin and are baptized. Do we really believe this? Do we live as though we do?

2. In our second reading for Holy Mass, we heard an excerpt from the third chapter of the First Letter of St. John. St. John is called the beloved disciple for good reason. He had a unique and special relationship with the Lord. The image of him resting his head on the chest of the Lord at the last supper is a beautiful image of that relationship.

And his Gospel and letters are filled with proclaiming the love of the Father and the Son - and our own call to love one another as the Lord loves us. The entire third chapter of this letter is about that call. This portion also assures us that if we live that way, loving in both word and deed, we remain in Him and He remains in us and He hears and answers our prayers. Let's live in love.

3. On this fifth Sunday of Easter, we heard a portion of the 15th chapter of the Gospel of St. John proclaimed. Jesus tells His disciples – and that includes you and me – that He is the vine, and we are the branches. We are to stay joined to Him in order to bear fruit. This connection to Jesus is maintained when we pray, stay in the state of grace, read the Word of God, frequent the Eucharist, and make Him the center of our lives.

Yesterday's relationship with the Lord is not sufficient for today. We are called to remain attached to Jesus, the Vine, and to receive from Him divine life, that is what grace is. It is this kind of ongoing, dynamic relationship with the Lord that makes ordinary men and women extraordinary and turns sinners into saints.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection April 29, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Monday, April 29th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 14:5-18

5 but eventually with the connivance of the authorities a move was made by gentiles as well as Jews to make attacks on them and to stone them.

6 When they came to hear of this, they went off for safety to Lycaonia where, in the towns of Lystra and Derbe and in the surrounding country,

7 they preached the good news.

8 There was a man sitting there who had never walked in his life, because his feet were crippled from birth;

9 he was listening to Paul preaching, and Paul looked at him intently and saw that he had the faith to be cured.

10 Paul said in a loud voice, 'Get to your feet-stand up,' and the cripple jumped up and began to walk.

11 When the crowds saw what Paul had done they shouted in the language of Lycaonia, 'The gods have come down to us in human form.'

12 They addressed Barnabas as Zeus, and since Paul was the principal speaker they called him Hermes.

13 The priests of Zeus-outside-the-Gate, proposing that all the people should offer sacrifice with them, brought garlanded oxen to the gates.

14 When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard what was happening they tore their clothes, and rushed into the crowd, shouting,

15 'Friends, what do you think you are doing? We are only human beings, mortal like yourselves. We have come with good news to make you turn from these empty idols to the living God who made sky and earth and the sea and all that these hold.

16 In the past he allowed all the nations to go their own way;

17 but even then he did not leave you without evidence of himself in the good things he does for you: he sends you rain from heaven and seasons of fruitfulness; he fills you with food and your hearts with merriment.'



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

18 With this speech they just managed to prevent the crowd from offering them sacrifice.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16

1 Not to us, Yahweh, not to us, but to your name give the glory, for your faithful love and your constancy!

2 Why should the nations ask, 'Where is their God?'

3 Our God is in heaven, he creates whatever he chooses.

4 They have idols of silver and gold, made by human hands.

15 May you be blessed by Yahweh, who made heaven and earth.

16 Heaven belongs to Yahweh, but earth he has given to the children of Adam.

Gospel, John 14:21-26

21 Whoever holds to my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me; and whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and reveal myself to him.'

22 Judas -- not Judas Iscariot -- said to him, 'Lord, what has happened, that you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?'

23 Jesus replied: Anyone who loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make a home in him.

24 Anyone who does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not my own: it is the word of the Father who sent me.

25 I have said these things to you while still with you;

26 but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 29, 2024

1. As we continue through the Fifty days of Easter, headed toward the celebration of Pentecost, it is important to recall that these accounts from the Acts of the Apostles occurred after Pentecost. The Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the early Christians, as Jesus promised, and His very own ministry was continuing through them.

Even though St. Paul had not been in the upper room, he was profoundly converted on his Damascus Journey, Baptized and received the Holy Spirit. He refers to himself as an apostle "born out of the ordinary course" or "untimely born" in his first letter to the Corinthians, he met the criteria for an Apostle in that he was a witness to the Resurrection (Acts 1:22) This is how he refers to himself in his letter to the Corinthians:

"Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." (1 Cor. 15:8)

And, as we hear in this powerful account, the miracles performed by Jesus Christ, such as healing a crippled man, now occur through Paul. That same Holy Spirit has been given to the Church in our time as well.

Do we believe this?

2. When the crowd saw the power of the Spirit at work through the Apostle Paul in our first reading, they wanted to worship him as a "god", falling back on their pagan deities, even offering sacrifice. Paul says "We are only human beings, mortal like yourselves. We have come with good news to make you turn from these empty idols to the living God who made sky and earth and the sea and all that these hold."

And, David the Psalmist carries on the theme in the excerpt appointed as our response today. The true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is alone to be worshipped. David sings of the truth that He alone is the Creator and all other idols must be rejected. In our day, the idols may not be cast out of gold and silver, but they are as lethal, if not more so. They must all be rejected.

3. In these wonderful words of Jesus, presented in the excerpt from the Gospel of St John, we are told that God wants to come and abide, actually live within us, make His home within us. Remaining, living, abiding in Jesus, calls us to find our home in His Church. The Church is meant to be the home of the whole human race.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

The early Christians believed that to belong to Jesus was to belong to His Church. They believed that just as we were all born from our mother's womb - so we are invited by God, in and through Jesus Christ, to be born again into the Church, the new humanity which is being re-created in Him. The Baptismal font was even spoken of as a second womb.

The process of redemption began when we passed through the Sacramental Waters of the font of Holy Baptism. It continues as we cooperate with the Grace given to us in our life within the Church. It will be fully completed when the Lord Returns and we are raised in Resurrected Bodies and live in a new heaven and a new earth!

This understanding of the Church as a participation in Christ and entry into the Trinitarian Communion runs throughout the writings of the early Church Fathers. Here two snippets.

First, from Origen: "Christ has flooded the universe with divine and sanctifying waves. For the thirsty he sends a spring of living water from the wound which the spear opened in His side. From the wound in Christ's side has come forth the Church, and He has made her His bride"

Then, from Bishop Irenaeus of Lyons, a disciple of Polycarp who was himself a disciple of the Apostle John: "We need to take refuge with the Church, to drink milk at her breast, to be fed with the scriptures of the Lord. For the Church has been planted in the world as a paradise"

Do we view the Church this way? Have we asked the Lord to come and live within us today?



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection April 30, 2024



Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 30th, 2024

Reading 1, Acts 14:19-28

19 Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and turned the people against them. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the town, thinking he was dead.

20 The disciples came crowding round him but, as they did so, he stood up and went back to the town. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

21 Having preached the good news in that town and made a considerable number of disciples, they went back through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.

22 They put fresh heart into the disciples, encouraging them to persevere in the faith, saying, 'We must all experience many hardships before we enter the kingdom of God.'

23 In each of these churches they appointed elders, and with prayer and fasting they commended them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

24 They passed through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia.

25 Then after proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia

26 and from there sailed for Antioch, where they had originally been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.

27 On their arrival they assembled the church and gave an account of all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the gentiles.

28 They stayed there with the disciples for some time.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 145:10-11, 12-13, 21

10 All your creatures shall thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful shall bless you.

11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingship and tell of your might,

12 making known your mighty deeds to the children of Adam, the glory and majesty of your kingship.

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

13 Your kingship is a kingship for ever, your reign lasts from age to age. Yahweh is trustworthy in all his words, and upright in all his deeds.

21 My mouth shall always praise Yahweh, let every creature bless his holy name for ever and ever.

Gospel, John 14:27-31

27 Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace which the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

28 You heard me say: I am going away and shall return. If you loved me you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29 I have told you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe.

30 I shall not talk to you much longer, because the prince of this world is on his way. He has no power over me,

31 but the world must recognise that I love the Father and that I act just as the Father commanded. Come now, let us go.



Catholic Online School
catholiconline.school
customerservice@catholiconline.school

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

Questions for Reflection for April 30, 2024

1. "The 'door of faith' (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church." With these words, taken from an apostolic letter he wrote entitled "The Door of Faith", Pope Benedict XVI welcomed a Year of Faith in 2011.

He referenced the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles at the beginning of the First millennium of Christianity. Upon their return, "They called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith..." (Acts 14:27). That same door of faith is opening for you and me, the disciples Jesus has called on mission to the world of the Third millennium of Christianity. However, we need to knock, enter in and learn to live in the House.

The image of the door invites us to reflect on the invitation we each were given when we entered into the Church, through the waters of the second womb of Baptism. Faith is a Verb, a call to a dynamic participation in the life of God; a call to be a part of His ongoing loving plan for the whole world as it continues through the Risen Christ who walks with us now in His Body, the Church, of which we are members. (1 Cor. 12:27)

This call engages our freedom. We must choose to knock, to enter into the House and then learn to live there. Jesus gives us the example of knocking on the door of the house of a friend in which the owner acts because of persistence. He then explains the relational context behind our own persistence in prayer. We are sons and daughters of "His Father and Our Father". (John 20:17).

Have we entered through the "Door of Faith?"

2. In our responsorial Psalm we can join with David and cry out: "All your creatures shall thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful shall bless you.

They shall speak of the glory of your kingship and tell of your might, making known your mighty deeds to the children of Adam, the glory and majesty of your kingship."

Do we speak of the glory of His Kingship? Do we make known His mighty deeds? The Lord has moved in each of our lives. Stop for a moment today and reflect on those times when you have experienced answered prayer. When have you encountered the Lord powerfully moving in your life? If you have, share it, give it away to others. Keep the song of the Psalmist alive today! If you have not, today is the day. Just turn to Him and ask Him!

Catholic Online School

catholiconline.school

3. The Gospel text appointed for today follows immediately after Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit. Jesus promises his disciples, and remember that includes you and me, PEACE. But he explains that it is a peace the world cannot give. It is not an absence of conflict or struggle. That is a part of the life of discipleship. Rather, it is a relationship with Him which enables us to remain, even in the midst of struggle, serene and filled with living faith. We need more and more of the Holy Spirit.

Let's be honest. Life is often difficult, painful, and filled with obstacles. Yes, even when you are praying, being as faithful as you can be, cooperating with grace and really trying to believe in the Lord and all that he teaches through His Church. Pain, failure, opposition, hardship, struggle, disappointment all just seem to be a part of the program. The saints of old, such as St. Paul, grew so accustomed to difficulties they began to "boast" of them. The question that we should ask ourselves when we face struggle, difficulty, failure, disappointment, and the frequent pain of real life is how do we respond to the invitation that they offer to us?

Every difficulty, struggle and experience of opposition or pain can become an invitation to exercise our freedom, informed by our faith, to truly believe in and embrace the loving plan of God. To the man or woman who is sincerely committed to following the Lord, embracing these experiences in the surrender of authentic discipleship can pave the path to holiness, form the raw material for continued conversion and equip him/her more fully for the work of the Gospel.

It is not the difficulties, struggles and hardships which lessen in life as we age. Rather, they just change their complexion. We change in and through them. They can become the vehicle for some of the greatest growth in our relationship with the Lord. What had been intended for our demise can become the path to our restoration.

Let's hear the promise of Jesus today. He is the Prince of Peace. He offers us this kind of peace. Not only is it true that "this world" cannot offer such a fruit of the Spirit. But it is also true that when it is cultivated in our life, as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, "this world" cannot take it away.