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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 2026



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 1, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 1st, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 50:4-9

4 Lord Yahweh has given me a disciple's tongue, for me to know how to give a word of comfort to the weary. Morning by morning he makes my ear alert to listen like a disciple.

5 Lord Yahweh has opened my ear and I have not resisted, I have not turned away.

6 I have offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; I have not turned my face away from insult and spitting.

7 Lord Yahweh comes to my help, this is why insult has not touched me, this is why I have set my face like flint and know that I shall not be put to shame.

8 He who grants me saving justice is near! Who will bring a case against me? Let us appear in court together! Who has a case against me? Let him approach me!

9 Look, Lord Yahweh is coming to my help! Who dares condemn me? Look at them, all falling apart like moth-eaten clothes!

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34

8 I am estranged from my brothers, alienated from my own mother's sons;

9 for I am eaten up with zeal for your house, and insults directed against you fall on me.

10 I mortify myself with fasting, and find myself insulted for it,

21 To eat they gave me poison, to drink, vinegar when I was thirsty.

22 May their own table prove a trap for them, and their abundance a snare;

31 for this will please Yahweh more than an ox, than a bullock horned and hooped.

33 For God listens to the poor, he has never scorned his captive people.

34 Let heaven and earth and seas, and all that stirs in them, acclaim him!



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Gospel, Matthew 26:14-25

14 Then one of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests

15 and said, 'What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?' They paid him thirty silver pieces,

16 and from then onwards he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

17 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus to say, 'Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?'

18 He said, 'Go to a certain man in the city and say to him, "The Master says: My time is near. It is at your house that I am keeping Passover with my disciples." '

19 The disciples did what Jesus told them and prepared the Passover.

20 When evening came he was at table with the Twelve.

21 And while they were eating he said, 'In truth I tell you, one of you is about to betray me.'

22 They were greatly distressed and started asking him in turn, 'Not me, Lord, surely?'

23 He answered, 'Someone who has dipped his hand into the dish with me will betray me.'

24 The Son of man is going to his fate, as the scriptures say he will, but alas for that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!

25 Judas, who was to betray him, asked in his turn, 'Not me, Rabbi, surely?' Jesus answered, 'It is you who say it.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 1, 2026

1. On this Wednesday of Holy Week, we are offered another excerpt from the Messianic Hebrew Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the "Suffering Servant", in our first reading appointed for Holy Mass. Listen to these words:

"I have offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; I have not turned my face away from insult and spitting. Lord Yahweh comes to my help, this is why insult has not touched me, this is why I have set my face like flint and know that I shall not be put to shame."

To the believing Christian, it is obvious that the Narrative we heard on Passion Sunday - and what we will soon hear on Good Friday - , the account of the Passion, suffering and voluntary death of Jesus Christ, is the fulfillment of this prophetic proclamation uttered centuries before.

The conception, birth, life, suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, was all a part of Gods loving plan for our redemption, indeed the redemption of the whole world. The Apostle Paul, in his letters in the New Testament to the Colossians and the Ephesians speaks of it as a plan, hidden from the ages" and now revealed to us

Do we believe this? Do we understand what this plan means for our own lives?

Jesus Christ died for our Sins. He suffered intensely on our behalf. He shed his blood as an atonement, the spotless Lamb of God.

Sin has consequences. It separates us from God. The Apostle Paul told the Romans, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." (Romans 6:23-25)

Jesus paid the consequences for my sin. For Your Sin. For the sins of the whole world. He died, so we can live.

Do we believe this?

2. The Psalmist continues this theme of Gods loving plan in the Response we chant or recite today - note this one line, they gave him "to drink, vinegar when I was thirsty." In the rest of Psalm 69, outside of the passage recited at Mass, we see even more clearly the Messianic overtones of the entire Psalm.



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The offering of vinegar is a mockery of the claim of Jesus that He was sent by the Father and that he had a kingdom to give, not of this world. These Psalms were committed to memory by the Jewish people. These words were fulfilled on the Hill of Calvary.

In Psalm 69:9, we read that the "insults (or reproaches) directed at you fell on Me." The author of the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews, writes "Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore, let us go forth to him outside the camp, bearing abuse for him." (Hebrews 13:12,13)

Over the next few days, the Church, as Mother and Teacher, invites us to enter more deeply into the "mystery" and make it our own.

3. Our Gospel begins underscoring the plan. Jesus tells his disciples to prepare the Passover meal. He knows what is to come. He was born to die, so that we may live. He had a man ready to give to his disciples the place where the Passover would be celebrated, the priesthood instituted, and the first Eucharist confected. The place where he would also wash the feet of His faithful disciples.

But one was to betray him. The treacherous betrayal by Judas should make us all pause and seriously reflect on what matters most to us during this Holy Week.

Judas was chosen by the Lord. He was invited to respond, to exercise his own human freedom and respond to that choice with his own choice, to put Jesus first. Notice the question posed to Judas:

'What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?'

They paid him thirty silver pieces, and from then onwards he began to look for an opportunity to betray him."

Anytime we exchange Jesus Christ for something else, we lose the greatest gift of all. Any time we fail to defend our faith in Him and our Catholic faith we, in a sense, skirt dangerously close to the treachery of Judas. Jesus gives us the greatest gift imaginable. He gives us Himself, and with Him, eternal life, freedom from the consequences of sin, including death itself.

Over these next few days, we are offered an invitation. A choice. To place Him first, in everything.

How will we respond?

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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 2, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, April 2nd, 2026

Reading 1, Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

1 Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt,

2 'This month must be the first of all the months for you, the first month of your year.

3 Speak to the whole community of Israel and say, "On the tenth day of this month each man must take an animal from the flock for his family: one animal for each household.

4 If the household is too small for the animal, he must join with his neighbour nearest to his house, depending on the number of persons. When you choose the animal, you will take into account what each can eat.

5 It must be an animal without blemish, a male one year old; you may choose it either from the sheep or from the goats.

6 You must keep it till the fourteenth day of the month when the whole assembly of the community of Israel will slaughter it at twilight.

7 Some of the blood must then be taken and put on both door-posts and the lintel of the houses where it is eaten.

8 That night, the flesh must be eaten, roasted over the fire; it must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

11 This is how you must eat it: with a belt round your waist, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. You must eat it hurriedly: it is a Passover in Yahweh's honour.

12 That night, I shall go through Egypt and strike down all the first-born in Egypt, man and beast alike, and shall execute justice on all the gods of Egypt, I, Yahweh!

13 The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. When I see the blood I shall pass over you, and you will escape the destructive plague when I strike Egypt.

14 This day must be commemorated by you, and you must keep it as a feast in Yahweh's honour. You must keep it as a feast-day for all generations; this is a decree for all time.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16, 17-18

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.

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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.

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

Reading 2, First Corinthians 11:23-26

23 For the tradition I received from the Lord and also handed on to you is that on the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread,

24 and after he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

25 And in the same way, with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.'

26 Whenever you eat this bread, then, and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes.

Gospel, John 13:1-15

1 Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, having loved those who were his in the world, loved them to the end.

2 They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray him.

3 Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God,

4 and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist;

5 he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

7 Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.'



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8 'Never!' said Peter. 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have no share with me.' Simon Peter said,

9 'Well then, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!'

10 Jesus said, 'No one who has had a bath needs washing, such a person is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.'

11 He knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, 'though not all of you are'.

12 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand', he said, 'what I have done to you?'

13 You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am.

14 If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet.

15 I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.



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Questions for Reflection for April 2, 2026

1. Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples on this day called "Holy Thursday". He recounted with them, the great deliverance from Egypt for Israel and fulfilled the command given in our first reading. But he also fulfilled that Passover meal, indeed transformed it - becoming Himself the Lamb of God for the New Israel, the Church, born from His wounded side on Calvary - and sent into the whole world to continue His redemptive mission.

The Easter Triduum (Three Days) begins with Holy Thursday. It marks the end of the forty days of Lent and the beginning of the three-day celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday - which is called in Latin, the TRIDUUM.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council reminded us of the extraordinary significance of the Triduum with this explanation:

"Christ redeemed us all and gave perfect glory to God principally through his paschal mystery: dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life. Therefore, the Easter Triduum of the passion and resurrection of Christ is the culmination of the entire liturgical year." (General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, # 18)

These last Forty Days were a time of preparation for these Three days. These three days lead us to an empty tomb and into an Octave, eight days, of celebrating the Resurrection. They introduce an entire liturgical season, the Easter Season, which lasts for Fifty days until Pentecost.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church instructs us: "Beginning with the Easter Triduum as its source of light, the new age of the Resurrection fills the whole liturgical year with its brilliance. Gradually, on either side of this source, the year is transfigured by the liturgy".

"It really is a "year of the Lord's favor." The economy of salvation is at work within the framework of time, but since its fulfillment in the Passover of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the culmination of history is anticipated "as a foretaste," and the kingdom of God enters into our time."

"Therefore, Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the "Feast of feasts," the "Solemnity of solemnities," just as the Eucharist is the "Sacrament of sacraments" (the Great Sacrament). St. Athanasius calls Easter "the Great Sunday" and the Eastern Churches call Holy Week "the Great Week."



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The mystery of the Resurrection, in which Christ crushed death, permeates with its powerful energy our old time, until all is subjected to him." (CCC #1168, 1169)

These three days are really one day. Now, let us begin.

2. The Apostle Paul addresses the importance and centrality of the proper celebration of the Holy Mass and the gift of the most Holy Eucharist, in our second reading. He reminds the Christians in Corinth, and all of us, of that Passover night, when Jesus Christ, right before he died, celebrated the first Eucharist and instituted the Holy Priesthood.

Notice the Words Paul says. He "hands down" to the early Christians what Jesus said (and the expression in Greek is where we get our word "tradition"):

"This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me." In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me." Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death."

These very same words, with little variance, are still said by the Priest today. They are the words of Jesus Christ! The priest stands, as we say in theology, in the person of Jesus, the High Priest. We say it in Latin "in persona Christi". Not taking the place of Christ, as some accuse us of. But, this means that it is Jesus Himself celebrating. And, it is Jesus Himself being He is the Priest. He is the Victim.

No-one has the right to alter these words.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI is one of the great liturgists of our age. His seminal book, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, written when he was still Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, is required reading in most seminaries and should be read by every Catholic. In the last year of his service, before this humble, holy man voluntarily stepped aside and dedicated the rest of his days to a monastic vocation, he gave a beautiful series of instructions on the Liturgy.

On October 3, 2012, he reminded the pilgrims in St Peter's square: "It is not the individual - priest or layman - or the group that celebrates the liturgy, but it is primarily God's action through the Church, which has its own history, its rich tradition and creativity."

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This universality and fundamental openness, which is characteristic of the entire liturgy is one of the reasons why it cannot be created or amended by the individual community or by experts but must be faithful to the forms of the universal Church.

Dear friends, the Church is made visible in many ways: in its charitable work, in mission projects, in the personal apostolate that every Christian must realize in his or her own environment. But the place where it is fully experienced as a Church is in the liturgy: it is the act in which we believe that God enters into our reality and we can meet Him, we can touch Him. It is the act in which we come into contact with God, He comes to us, and we are enlightened by Him."

When we hear those words of consecration, how closely do we listen?

3. The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper of Holy Thursday deepens our understanding of the self-emptying love of Jesus Christ. On this day we celebrate the gift of the ministerial priesthood which continues to make present the Priesthood of Jesus Christ present in the Church in our own day. When the Priest stands at that altar, he stands in Jesus Christ the High Priest. Christ is the Priest and the Victim. Jesus gave Himself to us and in the Eucharist, He comes to reside within us. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the Holy Oblation of Incarnate Love.

At the Last Supper, Jesus Sacramentally anticipated the altar of the Cross at which He would willingly pour out the last drop of His Blood, out of love for the world. He did so to set us free from the bondage of sin, and death. St. Paul told the Galatian Christians, "For freedom Christ set us free." (Gal. 5:1)

When the Lord rose from that table, He showed us the naturally supernatural expression of Love; an expression that reveals the heart of the Christian vocation. He, who is Lord and Master, King of Kings, took off His Cloak of Royal Splendor and became a Servant.

He washed the feet of those whom He had chosen to continue His Redemptive work. He showed them what they were chosen to do. Then, He enlisted them to live lives of self-emptying Love for the world. To bear the name "Christian" is to walk in this love in the midst of a broken and wounded world that is waiting to be reborn.

The Gospel I proclaim as the Deacon at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper ends with these words:

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"So, when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am.

If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."
(John 13:1-15)

The Eucharist is the "Sacrament of Love", in the words of Benedict XVI. In the Encyclical letter entitled "God is Love" (Deus Caritas Est") he underscored the depth of the Mystery revealed in that penultimate Sacrament and connected that Sacrament to our choice to live lives of sacrificial love in the world. That is what I mean by the expression Love is a verb.

Foot washing expresses what living a Eucharistic Life, a life of self-emptying love, is meant to look like. This Holy Thursday foot washing has been traditionally referred to as "the Mandatum", the Command. It is a command to become a man or woman poured out for others.

Through our participation in the Mysteries of these three Holy days, this one day; we encounter the Lord. In that encounter He calls us afresh to follow Him and to make Him present for others.

In order to truly be a Christian - it helps us to remember what names mean in the biblical sense. They communicate identity. We bear the name of Christ. Through grace we are capacitated to become a manifestation of the self-emptying love of Jesus the Christ in our daily lives.

After He washes feet, he shares a final meal with his closest friends. All of this before He would suffer and freely stretch out His sacred arms to embrace the entire world and join heaven to earth, showing the depth and substance of true love.

During the Supper, Jesus inaugurates the holy exchange, the Eucharist. He gives Himself as food for those who will make the journey with Him back to the Father and then sends them out to bring the whole world with them, by continuing His mission.

The next day He walks the way of suffering and mounts the altar of sacrifice on Golgotha's Hill to fully pour Himself out - every last drop of blood and water flowing from His wounded side - for us all. Through His death and Resurrection, he begins creation anew, overcomes the power of sin, pays the debt of justice and defeats the devil and the last enemy death.

As we enter into these three days, the one day, we make this mystery our own. No mere spectators in this Act of Love we become participants.

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We who bear the name "Christian" are to pick up that basin and towel, to climb upon that Cross and learn to live the Way of Love in service.

Our faith and love are to be active and incarnate. We live in the One who continues to show the whole world His love through us. Jesus washes his disciple's feet, using our hands. We make the mystery real in a world that awaits the fullness of redemption.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 3, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, April 3rd, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 52:13--53:12

13 Look, my servant will prosper, will grow great, will rise to great heights.

14 As many people were aghast at him -- he was so inhumanly disfigured that he no longer looked like a man-

15 so many nations will be astonished and kings will stay tight-lipped before him, seeing what had never been told them, learning what they had not heard before.

1 Who has given credence to what we have heard? And who has seen in it a revelation of Yahweh's arm?

2 Like a sapling he grew up before him, like a root in arid ground. He had no form or charm to attract us, no beauty to win our hearts;

3 he was despised, the lowest of men, a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering, one from whom, as it were, we averted our gaze, despised, for whom we had no regard.

4 Yet ours were the sufferings he was bearing, ours the sorrows he was carrying, while we thought of him as someone being punished and struck with affliction by God;

5 whereas he was being wounded for our rebellions, crushed because of our guilt; the punishment reconciling us fell on him, and we have been healed by his bruises.

6 We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and Yahweh brought the acts of rebellion of all of us to bear on him.

7 Ill-treated and afflicted, he never opened his mouth, like a lamb led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep dumb before its shearers he never opened his mouth.

8 Forcibly, after sentence, he was taken. Which of his contemporaries was concerned at his having been cut off from the land of the living, at his having been struck dead for his people's rebellion?

9 He was given a grave with the wicked, and his tomb is with the rich, although he had done no violence, had spoken no deceit.

10 It was Yahweh's good pleasure to crush him with pain; if he gives his life as a sin offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his life, and through him Yahweh's good pleasure will be done.



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11 After the ordeal he has endured, he will see the light and be content. By his knowledge, the upright one, my servant will justify many by taking their guilt on himself.

12 Hence I shall give him a portion with the many, and he will share the booty with the mighty, for having exposed himself to death and for being counted as one of the rebellious, whereas he was bearing the sin of many and interceding for the rebellious.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25

2 turn your ear to me, make haste. Be for me a rock-fastness, a fortified citadel to save me.

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

12 I have no more place in their hearts than a corpse, or something lost.

13 All I hear is slander -- terror wherever I turn -- as they plot together against me, scheming to take my life.

15 every moment of my life is in your hands, rescue me from the clutches of my foes who pursue me;

16 let your face shine on your servant, save me in your faithful love.

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,

Reading 2, Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

14 Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must hold firm to our profession of faith.

15 For the high priest we have is not incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us, but has been put to the test in exactly the same way as ourselves, apart from sin.

16 Let us, then, have no fear in approaching the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace when we are in need of help.

7 During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, with loud cries and with tears, to the one who had the power to save him from death, and, winning a hearing by his reverence,

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8 he learnt obedience, Son though he was, through his sufferings;

9 when he had been perfected, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

Gospel, John 18:1--19:42

1 After he had said all this, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron valley where there was a garden into which he went with his disciples.

2 Judas the traitor knew the place also, since Jesus had often met his disciples there,

3 so Judas brought the cohort to this place together with guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Knowing everything that was to happen to him, Jesus came forward and said, 'Who are you looking for?'

5 They answered, 'Jesus the Nazarene.' He said, 'I am he.' Now Judas the traitor was standing among them.

6 When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,' they moved back and fell on the ground.

7 He asked them a second time, 'Who are you looking for?' They said, 'Jesus the Nazarene.'

8 Jesus replied, 'I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.'

9 This was to fulfil the words he had spoken, 'Not one of those you gave me have I lost.'

10 Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

12 The cohort and its tribune and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him.

13 They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

14 It was Caiaphas who had counselled the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'



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15 Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace,

16 but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the door-keeper and brought Peter in.

17 The girl on duty at the door said to Peter, 'Aren't you another of that man's disciples?' He answered, 'I am not.'

18 Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

19 The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

20 Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together; I have said nothing in secret.

21 Why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught; they know what I said.'

22 At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, 'Is that the way you answer the high priest?'

23 Jesus replied, 'If there is some offence in what I said, point it out; but if not, why do you strike me?'

24 Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him, 'Aren't you another of his disciples?' He denied it saying, 'I am not.'

26 One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, 'Didn't I see you in the garden with him?'

27 Again Peter denied it; and at once a cock crowed.

28 They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves to avoid becoming defiled and unable to eat the Passover.

29 So Pilate came outside to them and said, 'What charge do you bring against this man?' They replied,

30 'If he were not a criminal, we should not have handed him over to you.'



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31 Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.' The Jews answered, 'We are not allowed to put anyone to death.'

32 This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die.

33 So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him and asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?'

34 Jesus replied, 'Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others said it to you about me?'

35 Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?'

36 Jesus replied, 'Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. As it is, my kingdom does not belong here.'

37 Pilate said, 'So, then you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'It is you who say that I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this, to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.'

38 'Truth?' said Pilate. 'What is that?' And so saying he went out again to the Jews and said, 'I find no case against him.'

39 But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release for you the king of the Jews?'

40 At this they shouted, 'Not this man,' they said, 'but Barabbas.' Barabbas was a bandit.

1 Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged;

2 and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head and dressed him in a purple robe.

3 They kept coming up to him and saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' and slapping him in the face.

4 Pilate came outside again and said to them, 'Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case against him.'

5 Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said, 'Here is the man.'

6 When they saw him, the chief priests and the guards shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him: I find no case against him.'

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7 The Jews replied, 'We have a Law, and according to that Law he ought to be put to death, because he has claimed to be Son of God.'

8 When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased.

9 Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus, 'Where do you come from?' But Jesus made no answer.

10 Pilate then said to him, 'Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?'

11 Jesus replied, 'You would have no power over me at all if it had not been given you from above; that is why the man who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.'

12 From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted, 'If you set him free you are no friend of Caesar's; anyone who makes himself king is defying Caesar.'

13 Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated him on the chair of judgement at a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha.

14 It was the Day of Preparation, about the sixth hour. 'Here is your king,' said Pilate to the Jews.

15 But they shouted, 'Away with him, away with him, crucify him.' Pilate said, 'Shall I crucify your king?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king except Caesar.'

16 So at that Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. They then took charge of Jesus,

17 and carrying his own cross he went out to the Place of the Skull or, as it is called in Hebrew, Golgotha,

18 where they crucified him with two others, one on either side, Jesus being in the middle.

19 Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews'.

20 This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

21 So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, 'You should not write "King of the Jews", but that the man said, "I am King of the Jews".'

22 Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.'



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23 When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem;

24 so they said to one another, 'Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.' In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled: They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothes. That is what the soldiers did.

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

26 Seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.'

27 Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

28 After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed and, so that the scripture should be completely fulfilled, he said: I am thirsty.

29 A jar full of sour wine stood there; so, putting a sponge soaked in the wine on a hyssop stick, they held it up to his mouth.

30 After Jesus had taken the wine he said, 'It is fulfilled!'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

31 It was the Day of Preparation, and to avoid the bodies' remaining on the cross during the Sabbath -- since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity -- the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away.

32 Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other.

33 When they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs

34 one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water.

35 This is the evidence of one who saw it -- true evidence, and he knows that what he says is true -- and he gives it so that you may believe as well.

36 Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture: Not one bone of his will be broken;

37 and again, in another place scripture says: They will look to the one whom they have pierced.



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38 After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus -- though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews -- asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away.

39 Nicodemus came as well -- the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time -- and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

40 They took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, following the Jewish burial custom.

41 At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried.

42 Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.



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Questions for Reflection for April 3, 2026

1. This is the Friday Christians call Good. We recall the Sacrifice offered on the second tree on Golgotha's Hill. The Savior whom St. Paul calls the last Adam (1 Cor.15:45) did for us what we could not do for ourselves. On the Hill of Calvary, heaven was wed to earth. By His Blood we were freed from the power of sin and death.

In Christian Churches throughout the world, between the hours of 12:00 - 3: 00 p.m., devotions such as the stations or the way of the cross recount his passion and death. Reflections on the last seven words of Jesus invite the faithful to ponder the meaning of His self-emptying on the Altar of the Cross.

As a Catholic clergyman. I will walk with my brothers into a dark sanctuary. The altar has been stripped of all altar cloths. The tabernacle is emptied of the consecrated Eucharist. Upon reaching the altar in silence; we will lay prostrate on the floor.

This is a sign of our surrendered love and an expression of awe in the face of the great mystery of the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Service is brief, but intense and powerful. The entire focus is on the Passion narrative in the Gospel There is no Holy Mass offered, but only a Liturgy of the Word, with the reception of the already consecrated Holy Eucharist by the faithful, extended prayers of the faithful for the Church and the world and the veneration of the Holy Cross.

Our first reading is perhaps the most powerful of the many references in the great Hebrew prophet Isaiah referencing the "Suffering Servant", and, as is evident to every Christian believer, the man of whom the prophet speaks is Jesus, the Christ, the One whose suffering and death we remember today, in such a solemn and powerful way.

2. The Second Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that Jesus is the Supreme High Priest and that His willing suffering and sacrifice of His own life - and every last drop of His Blood - has now won salvation for us and reunited us with the Father. His is the everlasting Sacrifice which fulfills and replaces all of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. And, in every Holy Mass offered, that one sacrifice is made miraculously and wonderfully present.

The author of this powerful letter, which was written to the early Jewish Christians, explains that in His Sacred Humanity Jesus was "perfected" and learned obedience through what He suffered. The Greek word "perfect" means complete. Jesus completed the very reason for which He was sent. He suffered and died to pay the penalty for our sin, defeat death, crush the head of the devil and open eternity to all who are baptized into Him and remain faithful, following His Way



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3. The Passion narrative is taken from the Gospel of St. John. After it is read, and a brief reflection given by the Priest, the Crucifix will be carried into the barren church to be revered and venerated by the faithful.

As the Cross is carried into the dark sanctuary, as a Deacon, I will chant "Behold the wood of the Cross on which hung the Salvation of the World. The faithful will respond, Come, let us Worship. The Cross will be presented for those who wish to venerate with a kiss, a touch or a reverent bow.

I am always drawn back to reflections from the early fathers of the undivided Christian Church. No matter where we stand in the divided Body of Christ, we all trace our roots back to the first Christian millennium when we were one.

These reflections come from our common family history. They are based on one line from the passion narrative in the Gospel of St. John which is read on Good Friday, "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water (John 19:33)

Origen wrote:

"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".

St. John Chrysostom explained:

"The gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy Eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord's side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own.

"There flowed from his side water and blood. Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit, and from the holy Eucharist".

"Since the symbols of baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim: "Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh!"



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As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death."

"Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life."

Do we understand what the Bishop is teaching?

This connection between Good Friday and the Church is woven throughout our common Christian tradition. St Augustine wrote - "There it was that the gate of life was opened, from there the sacraments of the Church flow; without these one does not enter true life."

As we contemplate the Passion of Jesus Christ, we should also ask the Holy Spirit to help us plumb the mystery and meaning of the Church. We are all members of the one Body of Jesus Christ. That Church which was born from the wounded side of the Savior.

Through both Word and Sacrament, Jesus, the head of His Body, continues to feed us so we can more fully into this communion which is ours through His Cross and Resurrection. Through the Holy Spirit we are empowered to participate in His continuing redemptive mission.

As the solemn commemoration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday continues, we join the needs of the whole world to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God who offered Himself on that second tree, to begin the new creation.

Then, silently, we leave to wait by the Tomb.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 4, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, April 4th, 2026

Reading 1, Genesis 1:1--2:2

1 In the beginning God created heaven and earth.

2 Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, with a divine wind sweeping over the waters.

3 God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light.

4 God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness.

5 God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day.

6 God said, 'Let there be a vault through the middle of the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was.

7 God made the vault, and it divided the waters under the vault from the waters above the vault.

8 God called the vault 'heaven'. Evening came and morning came: the second day.

9 God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was.

10 God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

11 God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees on earth, bearing fruit with their seed inside, each corresponding to its own species.' And so it was.

12 The earth produced vegetation: the various kinds of seed-bearing plants and the fruit trees with seed inside, each corresponding to its own species. God saw that it was good.

13 Evening came and morning came: the third day.

14 God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years.

15 Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was.



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16 God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars.

17 God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth,

18 to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good.

19 Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

20 God said, 'Let the waters be alive with a swarm of living creatures, and let birds wing their way above the earth across the vault of heaven.' And so it was.

21 God created great sea-monsters and all the creatures that glide and teem in the waters in their own species, and winged birds in their own species. God saw that it was good.

22 God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply on land.'

23 Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

24 God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature in its own species: cattle, creeping things and wild animals of all kinds.' And so it was.

25 God made wild animals in their own species, and cattle in theirs, and every creature that crawls along the earth in its own species. God saw that it was good.

26 God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the ground.'

27 God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that move on earth.'

29 God also said, 'Look, to you I give all the seed-bearing plants everywhere on the surface of the earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this will be your food.'

30 And to all the wild animals, all the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that creep along the ground, I give all the foliage of the plants as their food.' And so it was.



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31 God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

1 Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array.

2 On the seventh day God had completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35

1 Bless Yahweh, my soul, Yahweh, my God, how great you are! Clothed in majesty and splendour,

2 wearing the light as a robe! You stretch out the heavens like a tent,

5 You fixed the earth on its foundations, for ever and ever it shall not be shaken;

6 you covered it with the deep like a garment, the waters overtopping the mountains.

10 In the ravines you opened up springs, running down between the mountains,

12 on their banks the birds of the air make their nests, they sing among the leaves.

13 From your high halls you water the mountains, satisfying the earth with the fruit of your works:

14 for cattle you make the grass grow, and for people the plants they need, to bring forth food from the earth,

24 How countless are your works, Yahweh, all of them made so wisely! The earth is full of your creatures.

35 May sinners vanish from the earth, and the wicked exist no more! Bless Yahweh, my soul.

Reading 2, Genesis 22:1-18

1 It happened some time later that God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham!' he called. 'Here I am,' he replied.

2 God said, 'Take your son, your only son, your beloved Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, where you are to offer him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I shall point out to you.'



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3 Early next morning Abraham saddled his donkey and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place which God had indicated to him.

4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

5 Then Abraham said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I are going over there; we shall worship and then come back to you.'

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together.

7 Isaac spoke to his father Abraham. 'Father?' he said. 'Yes, my son,' he replied. 'Look,' he said, 'here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?'

8 Abraham replied, 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.' And the two of them went on together.

9 When they arrived at the place which God had indicated to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son and put him on the altar on top of the wood.

10 Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

11 But the angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham!' he said. 'Here I am,' he replied.

12 'Do not raise your hand against the boy,' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your own beloved son.'

13 Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

14 Abraham called this place 'Yahweh provides', and hence the saying today: 'On the mountain Yahweh provides.'

15 The angel of Yahweh called Abraham a second time from heaven.

16 'I swear by my own self, Yahweh declares, that because you have done this, because you have not refused me your own beloved son,

17 I will shower blessings on you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will gain possession of the gates of their enemies.



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18 All nations on earth will bless themselves by your descendants, because you have obeyed my command.'

Gospel, Matthew 28:1-10

1 After the Sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre.

2 And suddenly there was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it.

3 His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow.

4 The guards were so shaken by fear of him that they were like dead men.

5 But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay,

7 then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going ahead of you to Galilee; that is where you will see him." Look! I have told you.'

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.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 4, 2026

1. Tonight, is the Easter Vigil. Holy Saturday is a day with no Liturgy. We waited by the tomb. Now, in keeping with the ancient Hebrew understanding, the Vigil begins the new day. As we began, the new flame, representing the Light of Jesus Christ, was lit outside.

Then, I joined Catholic Deacons around the world in carrying the Paschal candle into the dark sanctuary proclaiming The Light of Christ in an ancient and beautiful chant. The faithful draw light from that new Paschal candle inside a dark church and spread it to one another.

The entire sanctuary soon becomes clothed in light as, one by one, men and women and children received the one light from the Paschal Candle which symbolizes Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

The symbolism speaks of our mission as Christians in the world. Candle by candle, the light of the Resurrection illuminates the world around us as He who is the Light of the World fills it with His radiance.

As the Liturgy progresses, Deacons around the world sung that ancient hymn of the Church which captures the depth of the mystery we celebrate on Easter, the Exultet, Here is the beginning:

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven. Exult, let Angel ministers of God exult. Let the trumpet of salvation sound aloud our mighty Kings triumph! Be glad let earth be glad as glory floods her. Ablaze with light from her eternal King, let all corners of the earth be glad, knowing an end to gloom and darkness. Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice, arrayed with the lightning of His glory, let this Holy Building shake with joy, filled with the mighty voices of the peoples!

The words to this ancient hymn offer us deep insights from the early Church into the meaning of what is called the Paschal mystery - the saving conception, nativity, life, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ.

The Easter Vigil Liturgy readings walk us through creation, salvation history, and the new creation in Jesus Christ.

The Hebrew Scriptures and then the New Testament unfold for us the great plan of a loving God. The Father who loves us did not leave us in sin - but sent His only Son into the world to save us. Jesus has set us free from the chains of sin and the ravages of death!

There are nine readings. We have chosen only three for this reflection.

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We begin with the first gift of God's love, creation. This theme of creation is woven through all of our readings, leading to the Gospel, where the women go to the tomb and find it is empty. Jesus has been raised, creation has begun, anew. Death was defeated by HIS death and the One through whom the first creation came now, Incarnate and raised, begins the New Creation.

2. The next reading, we choose to present for our friends throughout the world and our students, is taken from Genesis chapter 22. It tells the story of the Patriarch Abraham, whom the New Testament tells us is our father in Faith. We hear of his willingness to give up his only son, Isaac. A son who carries the wood for the offering. Abraham is not asked to do so by a loving God. But his obedience of faith is held up as a model for all of us. The account is also prefiguring the true Sacrifice which wins our Salvation and begins the New Creation. God the Father, offering His only Son, Jesus the Christ, who carries the wood for the sacrifice on his wounded back, in the form of the Cross of Calvary.

All of our readings from the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians call the Old Testament, throughout this beautiful Liturgy, the Easter Vigil Liturgy, offer us the best example of how Christian believers read the Old Testament. We see seeds of the New Testament in the Old Testament. We know that the Law and the Prophets all pointed to Jesus, the promised Messiah, whose total victory we celebrate on this Day of the Resurrection.

3. The Gospel offered to us for this Easter Vigil is the account of Mary of Magdala and the other Mary finding the EMPTY TOMB in the Gospel of St Matthew! The stone was rolled away by an angel. They are told that Jesus has been raised and sent out to tell His Brethren, as the first Christian missionaries. On the Way, they encounter the RISEN LORD! HALLELUJAH.

The tomb is empty. Death could not contain the One who poured Himself out in Love. The light floods the once dark cave and fills the entire world with hope. The debt has been paid, 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. The tomb is empty. 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 glorified now, beautiful, 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.



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He "who knew no sin", as the author of the New Testament letter to the Hebrews tells us, Jesus the Christ, walked in the perfect obedience of the Son and bridged the gap between the Father and the sons and daughters who had rejected His invitation to communion, through the offering of His own Body on the altar of the Cross. And now, He lives no more to die! The tomb is empty. Through His passion, His obedience unto death, and His Resurrection, He welcomes us into the very inner life of the Trinity. In Him we make our home in God.

In His sacred humanity He transforms the entire human experience. He invites us to live differently and shows us the path to peace, this way of the fullness of life now and eternal glory in the new world to come. The veil of the tabernacle has been torn. His flesh has become the bridge between heaven and earth. He has opened eternity to all who were bound by the chains of time. He has clothed in glorious freedom those once wrapped in the grave clothes of death.

He has given eternal purpose to the sheep who had wandered aimlessly in empty self-pursuits. The tomb is empty. The whole world, created through Him, is now re-created in Him. We see our lives differently as we open ourselves to His Spirit and allow Him to replace our finite vision with the eyes of eternal perspective.

Our feet become shod with the hope of the Good News as we walk the journey of faith following in His train. His redemptive mission continues through us to a world waiting to be born anew. He walks through time in His Body on earth, His church; the world reconciled. He invites all men and women to follow Him.

For these who are born again through the waters of Baptism every tomorrow is filled with hope. The tomb is empty We can find the purpose of eternity revealed in the temporal realities of every today. The real "stuff" of our mundane daily lives becomes the ingredients of our own sanctification; the materials out of which the new creation is fashioned anew around us. The materials have not changed; we have, because He lives now in us and we in Him. There is nothing we face alone, no tomorrow that is not redeemed and made new in the timeless One, who, out of endless, eternal, unquenchable love, came into time to redeem and transform it.

The tomb is empty Life for a Christian is not circular but linear. It is always moving forward to fulfillment in Him. There is a beginning - and an end - which is but a new beginning in the One who is Himself both the Beginning and the End. Time unfolds into eternity in Him who has entered time and transformed it by His life, death and Resurrection. That Glorious Day, understood by the Church as the first day of the new creation, that Day that the early Christians called the "Eighth Day"; is now upon us. It is the portal to eternity.

He is the firstborn, the first fruits of a new creation and is making all things new now, within us and around us. The tomb is empty.



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The ground upon which He breathed and formed our first brother Adam, the ground upon which He walked and into which they placed His sacred, lifeless Body, has opened wide. It could not contain Him. He Rose victorious from the dead! "Be not afraid" He now cries out causing the stones to burst forth in our own lives. "Be gone" He commands as he shines the light that dispels all the darkness! "Now since the children share in blood and flesh, he likewise shared in them, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death had been subject to slavery all their life. (Hebrews 2:14-15)".

The tomb is empty Life reigns. Death dies, dealt a fatal blow at the hands of the Warrior of love.

Through sin, death came into the world, and now through the Sinless One it has been vanquished. No longer an enemy, it is a friend, an ally, to those who live their lives in the One who has been raised. No longer an end it becomes a new beginning for all who hide their lives in

His wounded side and live their lives forever joined to Him. Nothing can separate us from that Love incarnated in the Crucified, Risen Son of the True and Living God. The tomb is empty When we embrace the implications of that empty tomb we begin to live in eternity, even now. We understand that He holds the future - our future and the future of this whole world that He still loves- in those wounded, glorified hands.

The events that we remember and celebrate during these Holy Days provide a lens, a "hermeneutic" of meaning for everything that happens in our daily lives. Even suffering and loss have beauty and irreplaceable value - redemptive, life transforming value- when we choose to follow the One who has been raised. The world is bathed in the newness of Easter. Happy Easter. The tomb is empty. We have Been Set Free from the Chains of Death and Hope fills the World. HAPPY EASTER!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 5, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, April 5th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 10:34, 37-43

34 Then Peter addressed them, 'I now really understand', he said, 'that God has no favourites,

37 You know what happened all over Judaea, how Jesus of Nazareth began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism.

38 God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.

39 Now we are witnesses to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and they killed him by hanging him on a tree,

40 yet on the third day God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen,

41 not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses that God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses -- we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead-

42 and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to bear witness that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead.

43 It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

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.'

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.

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

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



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Reading 2, Colossians 3:1-4

1 Since you have been raised up to be with Christ, you must look for the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.

2 Let your thoughts be on things above, not on the things that are on the earth,

3 because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God.

4 But when Christ is revealed -- and he is your life--you, too, will be revealed with him in glory.

Gospel, John 20:1-9

1 It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb

2 and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,' she said, 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

3 So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb.

4 They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first;

5 he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in.

6 Simon Peter, following him, also came up, went into the tomb, saw the linen cloths lying on the ground

7 and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself.

8 Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed.

9 Till this moment they had still not understood the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.



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Questions for Reflection for April 5, 2026

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."

As we follow Peter and John, whose story we heard proclaimed in our Gospel lesson for 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 too can we turn our world upside down because the Resurrection makes all things new, beginning now!

The implications of the Resurrection unfolded for them as they reflected on His saving life and death and yielded to the work of the Holy Spirit in their own lives. So, it must for us now, as we realize that Easter is more than a day, it is a way. Time became for them a tutor, no longer a tyrant.

Because the sting of death, sin, had been defeated, it became for them a portal into eternal life and communion with the One who has been raised. So, it is for each of us who now bear His Name. Time invites us into a field of choice where we can progress in freedom and become configured to the One whose Holy Resurrection we are celebrating.

2. And as the Apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Colossians, an excerpt of which is our second reading:

"Since you have been raised up to be with Christ, you must look for the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.



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Let your thoughts be on things above, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed -- and he is your life-you, too, will be revealed with him in glory."

Nothing can separate us from that Love incarnated in the Crucified, Risen Son of the True and Living God. Alleluia! The light floods the once dark cave and fills the entire world with hope. The debt has been paid, 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, and the light of the empty tomb, believing in His promise, shall live forever in Him, beginning now.

3. The Gospel appointed for the Easter Day Mass, from the Account of St. John, focuses on the reaction of those who went to the empty tomb. Telling us "Till this moment they had still not understood the scripture, that he must rise from the dead."

The Resurrection is the most important of the celebrations of the Church year.

Easter is more than a Day; it is a Way; A Way of living our lives differently now in Him because we have been set free. We are invited to do that by living them daily in His Church. The Church is His Body. The Church is the new world, in the course of transfiguration. That world created through Him out of love, but which was lost due to sin, is now being made new! His tomb is empty.

He came among us and began creation anew. That is why we celebrate. Death has been defeated by His Saving Death. In His Resurrection, we now live no more to die. Darkness has been scattered by the Light which breaks forth from that empty tomb and is meant to infuse our daily lives with the radiance of Resurrected love. What a Day! What a Way, the Easter Way, Alleluia!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 6, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, April 6th, 2026

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.

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

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 6, 2026

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!



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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!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 7, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 7th, 2026

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.

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 7, 2026

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.

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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!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 8, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 8th, 2026

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!

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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.



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 8, 2026

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?

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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.

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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 9, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, April 9th, 2026

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."



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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.'

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

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 9, 2026

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.



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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 10, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, April 10th, 2026

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.'

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.



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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.

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.'



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 10, 2026

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?

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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 11, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, April 11th, 2026

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.

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 11, 2026

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?



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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!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 12, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, April 12th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 2:42-47

42 These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

43 And everyone was filled with awe; the apostles worked many signs and miracles.

44 And all who shared the faith owned everything in common;

45 they sold their goods and possessions and distributed the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

46 Each day, with one heart, they regularly went to the Temple but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously;

47 they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

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.



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Reading 2, First Peter 1:3-9

3 Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

4 and into a heritage that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you

5 who are being kept safe by God's power through faith until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the final point of time.

6 This is a great joy to you, even though for a short time yet you must bear all sorts of trials;

7 so that the worth of your faith, more valuable than gold, which is perishable even if it has been tested by fire, may be proved -- to your praise and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.

8 You have not seen him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him you believe in him and so are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described;

9 and you are sure of the goal of your faith, that is, the salvation of your souls.

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.'



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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.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 12, 2026

1. In our first reading for this Second Sunday of Easter, we hear the end of the Second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. This wonderful book, written by the Apostle and Gospel writer St Luke, shows us the effects of the Resurrection on the early believers. They began to live differently.

In fact, before they were even called Christians, they were called "The Way" because of this. We hear of the elements of their new way of life. Christianity was not simply something they "did" on Sunday, the Lords Day for those early believers, it changed their entire way of life.

How about us?

2. In his first letter to the whole Church, the Apostle Peter, the head of the Apostles, the first Pope, continues this theme reminding the early Christians, and reminding each of us, that they - and we- have all been given a new birth, a new beginning, and a living hope because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As he explains, that does not mean there will not be struggles in this life. There will be but what changes is us - IF we truly give our lives to Jesus Christ and allow Him to live His Life through us.

We are still in the Easter Season. It began on Easter Sunday and continues for fifty days until we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church in the Upper Room.

Remember, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has been given to us as well, in Baptism and in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Apostle Paul reminded the Roman Christians that the same Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead is given to his followers.

Do we believe this? Do we ask the Holy Spirit to work through us?

3. The Second Sunday of Easter is "Divine Mercy Sunday" in the Roman Liturgical Calendar. The Gospel for the Liturgy (John 20: 19-31) recounts another one of the Post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ to his disciples. The glorified Jesus appears to his disciples, coming through locked doors and says, "Peace be with you." He breathes upon them the Holy Spirit, creating them anew. He also communicates His authority to forgive sins to the Apostles who will continue His redemptive mission through the Church, which is His Body.

However, Thomas was not present for this encounter. The Beloved disciple John records this exchange between the Risen Lord and Thomas which follows:

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"Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So, the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

"Now a week later his disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus bore His Wounds, now glorified, in His Risen Body. Thomas touched those wounds - and so can we.

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.

Not only was Jesus raised in a glorified Body, but our redemption will only be complete when we are raised bodily. The WHOLE PERSON is to be redeemed. Do we believe this? We profess it in our Creed every Sunday.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 13, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, April 13th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 4:23-31

23 As soon as they were released they went to the community and told them everything the chief priests and elders had said to them.

24 When they heard it they lifted up their voice to God with one heart. 'Master,' they prayed, 'it is you who made sky and earth and sea, and everything in them;

25 it is you who said through the Holy Spirit and speaking through our ancestor David, your servant: Why this uproar among the nations, this impotent muttering of the peoples?

26 Kings on earth take up position, princes plot together against the Lord and his Anointed.

27 'This is what has come true: in this very city Herod and Pontius Pilate plotted together with the gentile nations and the peoples of Israel, against your holy servant Jesus whom you anointed,

28 to bring about the very thing that you in your strength and your wisdom had predetermined should happen.

29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats and help your servants to proclaim your message with all fearlessness,

30 by stretching out your hand to heal and to work miracles and marvels through the name of your holy servant Jesus.'

31 As they prayed, the house where they were assembled rocked. From this time they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim the word of God fearlessly.

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

1 Why this uproar among the nations, this impotent muttering of the peoples?

2 Kings of the earth take up position, princes plot together against Yahweh and his anointed,

3 'Now let us break their fetters! Now let us throw off their bonds!'

4 He who is enthroned in the heavens laughs, Yahweh makes a mockery of them,

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5 then in his anger rebukes them, in his rage he strikes them with terror.

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.'

Gospel, John 3:1-8

1 There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews,

2 who came to Jesus by night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher; for no one could perform the signs that you do unless God were with him.'

3 Jesus answered: In all truth I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.

4 Nicodemus said, 'How can anyone who is already old be born? Is it possible to go back into the womb again and be born?'

5 Jesus replied: In all truth I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born through water and the Spirit;

6 what is born of human nature is human; what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 13, 2026

1. Notice the beautiful spontaneity in prayer of the Apostles as recorded by Luke in his account of the early Church, in the book of the Bible called the Acts of the Apostles. They had just appeared before the Council, facing hostility and danger. But what was different this time? they were!

They had received the promised Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had promised to send. And, one of the obvious signs of that Holy Spirit in their midst is this intimacy with the Lord in prayer. And, this Holy Boldness!

AS we continue in the Easter season, we move toward the celebration of Pentecost. Our readings at Holy Mass are not chronological. The account from our first readings followed after they had received that promised outpouring.

Among the readings read at the Mass on Pentecost day is the account of that first Christian Pentecost: "When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim." (Acts 2)

There is little doubt from their actions following that event that they truly were different. They went forward and turned the entire world upside down with their preaching and the witness of their changed lives. However, in many respects, the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, seems mysterious to many Christians in our own day. When I consider this reality, I am reminded of one of the many missionary stories recounted in the Acts of the Apostles.

Chapter 19 of Acts begins with these words, "While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the country and came (down) to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They answered him, "We have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." (Acts 19: 1, 2)

Too often we live our lives like those disciples in Ephesus. We act as though we did not realize there even is a Holy Spirit, still at work, still pouring out gifts and still making it possible for us to bear spiritual fruit. The same Holy Spirit is still changing each one of us, individually and collectively, into the Image of Jesus Christ. The same Holy Spirit is still calling us to make disciples of all the Nations.

Will we respond like the early believers?

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2. In our responsorial Psalm for today's Mass, we are reminded that the Lord spoke prophetically through David. In these words, we heard: "He said to me, 'You are my son, today have I fathered you. Ask of me, and I shall give you the nations as your birthright, the whole wide world as your possession. With an iron scepter you will break them, shatter them like so many pots.'"

These words were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose Resurrection we are still celebrating. He is the promised King, the One to whom this promise applies. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Is he your King?

3. The words of Jesus to Nicodemus are so vitally important. We must be born anew, or born from above, or, yes, born again. That begins for us at Baptism, where we are freed from original Sin and incorporated into the Body of Christ, the Church. But it does not end there. Our call is to continually cooperate with grace and grow in that newness of Life.

Sometimes, Catholic Christians are uncomfortable with the expression "born again". We shouldn't be. The Apostle Paul proclaimed in his second letter to the Corinthians: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; [a] the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." (2 Cor 5:17)

But this becoming new is a process. This is the reason why we renew our Baptismal vows during the Easter Liturgies. The reason why we are encouraged to bless ourselves with the waters of Baptism every time we enter into a Church Sanctuary.

Conversion is a lifelong process. For most of us, baptized as infants, it began when our parents presented us to the priest at our Baptism as children. But that was just the Beginning. The process of being born again is to continue throughout our whole lives until we pass over to the Lord in eternity. It is through the Sacraments, the Word and life in the Body of Christ, the Church, that the full experience of that Baptismal grace is brought to its fulfillment.

Our life as Christians is meant to be lived as a continuing encounter with the Lord. The Risen Jesus always comes to encounter us - in prayer, word, sacrament, one another, the poor, suffering, struggle - you name it. In all of these we can encounter Jesus, even if initially hidden, when we open our hearts to His Mercy and Love, by living faith.

This word encounter also explains his ecclesiology, or theology of the Church. The Church is the place of encounter. It is not some-thing but Some-One, the Body of the Risen Jesus. Jesus is the head of His Body and the head and the Body cannot be separated. Through our participation in the mission of the Church we participate in His continuing redemptive mission.



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This spirituality of encounter is a beautiful spirituality, a profound theology, and a treasure for this barren age. It comes at a moment when the whole Church - and the world into which she is called - desperately needs this spirituality of encounter more than anything else.

Can we say we are experiencing this encounter with the Lord regularly? He wants us too.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 14, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 14th, 2026

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.

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 14, 2026

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.

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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?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 15, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 15th, 2026

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.

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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.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 15, 2026

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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 16, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, April 16th, 2026

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.

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

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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.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 16, 2026

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. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches (Par.1831) "The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are

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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"?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 17, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, April 17th, 2026

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.

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

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 17, 2026

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?

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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 18, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, April 18th, 2026

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.



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 18, 2026

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!



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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.

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.

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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 19, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday April 19th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 2:14, 22-28

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.

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

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,

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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.

Reading 2, First Peter 1:17-21

17 And if you address as Father him who judges without favouritism according to each individual's deeds, live out the time of your exile here in reverent awe.

18 For you know that the price of your ransom from the futile way of life handed down from your ancestors was paid, not in anything perishable like silver or gold,

19 but in precious blood as of a blameless and spotless lamb, Christ.

20 He was marked out before the world was made, and was revealed at the final point of time for your sake.

21 Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for this very purpose -- that your faith and hope should be in God.

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;

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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.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 19, 2026

1. The second chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles reveals the Way that the early Christians lived their lives differently, because of the Saving Incarnation, conception, life, suffering, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. They were known by the people as "The Way". Because their faith gave birth to an entirely new way of Life.

Before they were called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) the followers of Jesus Christ were referred to as "the Way". The Apostle Paul wrote of having persecuted "this Way" prior to encountering the Risen Lord on the Road to Damascus. (Acts 22:3-16) The expression, "The Way" discloses the self-understanding of the early Christians. They believed, proclaimed, and lived their Christian faith as a new way of being human. Our relationship with Jesus Christ and membership in His Body, the Church, is meant to be experienced in the same way.

Do we?

2. Our Second reading is an excerpt from the first chapter of the first letter the Apostle Peter writes to all of the Churches. He is instructing them in how to live this New Way. Just prior to the verses read today, he has called them to holy living. That holy living, he explains, should give rise to a new way of relating to one another and to those to whom they are sent. He reminds them they have been delivered from a "futile" way of life. SO HAVE WE.

When we follow Jesus -in both word and deed - a dynamic process happens within us, a process of ever deepening conversion and transformation. We change. We are being converted.

We actually "participate in the Divine Nature", the Apostle Peter tells us in his second letter- beginning right now. (2 Peter 1:4). We are made complete, perfected in charity, by grace and our continued cooperation with grace. We begin to change into the very new men and women that Jesus Christ has now capacitated us to become.

3. Our Gospel for this Third Sunday of Easter is from Luke's Gospel. (Luke 24:13 - 35) 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.

The disciples continued 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.



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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 20, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, April 20th, 2026

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.

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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.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 20, 2026

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.



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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 21, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 21st, 2026

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;



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 21, 2026

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!"

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4. 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 continues 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). God's 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".

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!"



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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 22, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 22nd, 2026

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.



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 22, 2026

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.



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The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains:

"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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 23, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, April 23rd, 2026

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;

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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.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 23, 2026

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:

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"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.



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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?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 24, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, April 24th, 2026

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;

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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.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 24, 2026

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.

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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. 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



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

"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?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 25, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, April 25th, 2026

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,

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 25, 2026

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:

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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 26, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, April 26th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 2:14, 36-41

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.

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 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6

1 [Psalm Of David] Yahweh is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

2 In grassy meadows he lets me lie. By tranquil streams he leads me

3 to restore my spirit. He guides me in paths of saving justice as befits his name.

4 Even were I to walk in a ravine as dark as death I should fear no danger, for you are at my side. Your staff and your crook are there to soothe me.

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5 You prepare a table for me under the eyes of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup brims over.

6 Kindness and faithful love pursue me every day of my life. I make my home in the house of Yahweh for all time to come.

Reading 2, First Peter 2:20-25

20 but what glory is there in putting up with a beating after you have done something wrong? The merit in the sight of God is in putting up with it patiently when you are punished for doing your duty.

21 This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow in his steps.

22 He had done nothing wrong, and had spoken no deceit.

23 He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was suffering he made no threats but put his trust in the upright judge.

24 He was bearing our sins in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our sins and live for uprightness; through his bruises you have been healed. 25 You had gone astray like sheep but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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.

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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.

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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 26, 2026

1. In our first reading, we are given excerpts from the Second Chapter of Acts. When read in its context, we discover that the Apostle Peter was fearlessly preaching the full gospel immediately after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

Gone was the frightened follower of Jesus who denied the Lord three times. Reinstated by the Risen Lord and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit which Jesus promised, his words "cut to the heart". Three thousand people encountered the Lord and entered the Church. Now that is inspired preaching!

That same Risen Jesus is with us today. He did not leave us after His Ascension. Rather, He sent the Holy Spirit to empower us and, we are now His Mystical Body, the Church. He speaks and ministers through us! Though we each have different assignments in the ongoing mission of the Church, every one of us has access as well to the same Holy Spirit which empowered Peter and the early believers. Do we believe this?

2. In our second reading, written by Peter, the first Pope, to the whole Church, we are reminded of what Jesus has done for us and urged to return to the Shepherd and guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ. This portion of the Letter follows at the end of the second chapter.

In the first part of the second chapter, he reminds the early believers, and he reminds each one of us, that we are "living stones" built into a spiritual house and, we are now called live true freedom, by willingly becoming servants of the Lord, disciples of Jesus Christ.

Do we understand the implications of this in our own lives? Do we see ourselves, first and last, as servants of the Lord on His mission?

3. In the portion of the Gospel of St. John appointed for this Holy Mass, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, Jesus tells the crowd that He Himself is the Good Shepherd. He himself is the gate, through which all men and women can enter into a relationship with the Father. That He will lay down His life for His sheep. This image of the Good Shepherd has Messianic meaning to the Jews who are listening.

For example, in the 34th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament, after prophesying against the false shepherds, the false leaders of Gods people, the Lord, speaking through the Prophet, tells the people that He is the Good Shepherd. That He would come to rescue them.



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Here are just two verses: "Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when some of his sheep have been scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep"

We are the sheep the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd has come to gather. We entered into the sheepfold through the waters of Baptism. Are we listening for His Voice?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 27, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, April 27th, 2026

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,



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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 10:11-18

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.



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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 27, 2026

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...

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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.



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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.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 28, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, April 28th, 2026

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.

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 28, 2026

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?



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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?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 29, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, April 29th, 2026

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.

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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.



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Questions for Reflection for April 29, 2026

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.

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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?

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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

April 30, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, April 30th, 2026

Reading 1, Acts 13:13-25

13 Paul and his companions went by sea from Paphos to Perga in Pamphylia where John left them to go back to Jerusalem.

14 The others carried on from Perga till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went to synagogue on the Sabbath and took their seats.

15 After the passages from the Law and the Prophets had been read, the presidents of the synagogue sent them a message, 'Brothers, if you would like to address some words of encouragement to the congregation, please do so.'

16 Paul stood up, raised his hand for silence and began to speak: 'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen!

17 The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors and made our people great when they were living in Egypt, a land not their own; then by divine power he led them out

18 and for about forty years took care of them in the desert.

19 When he had destroyed seven nations in Canaan, he put them in possession of their land

20 for about four hundred and fifty years. After this he gave them judges, down to the prophet Samuel.

21 Then they demanded a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. After forty years,

22 he deposed him and raised up David to be king, whom he attested in these words, "I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will perform my entire will."

23 To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour,

24 whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel.

25 Before John ended his course he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; there is someone coming after me whose sandal I am not fit to undo."

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27

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:

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21 My hand will always be with him, my arm will make him strong.

22 'No enemy will be able to outwit him, no wicked man overcome him;

25 I shall establish his power over the sea, his dominion over the rivers.

27 So I shall make him my first-born, the highest of earthly kings.

Gospel, John 13:16-20

16 'In all truth I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him.

17 'Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly.

18 I am not speaking about all of you: I know the ones I have chosen; but what scripture says must be fulfilled: 'He who shares my table takes advantage of me.

19 I tell you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe that I am He.

20 In all truth I tell you, whoever welcomes the one I send, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me.'



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Questions for Reflection for April 30, 2026

1. After having been commissioned in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas set out on mission. In our first reading, we have a portion of Paul's first recorded sermon in the Temple. It is very similar to the first sermon of Peter in the second chapter of Acts. Paul sets the context for proclaiming Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, Christ in Greek, the anointed One. He explains that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law, the prophetic insights of the Psalmist David and messianic promises of the Hebrew prophets.

He gives this sermon in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, invited to do so by the temple leaders.

Imagine how this might have seemed. By now, word of the Rabbi named Saul, the great persecutor of the early followers of Jesus, the one who stood approvingly at the stoning of the Deacon Stephen, had spread. But now, he is now using a new name and proclaiming that Jesus the promised Messiah.

And, he did so with such authority and power. How? Once again by the power of the Holy Spirit. Even though he was not at that first Pentecost, Paul certainly experienced the same encounter, and came to know of its powerful, transformative effects! (Romans 8:11)

The Holy Spirit capacitated the early followers of Jesus to go from being a frightened fraternity to a band of brothers and sisters of whom it was said "they turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) They were empowered to carry forward in time the ongoing mission of Jesus Christ until he returns to complete the work of redemption. We are now numbered among them as the Mission continues. How are we participating in the continuing missionary work of the Church?

2. The Psalmist, in this Messianic Psalm, sings of the oath God made with David and the promise God made to establish his kingdom. The Holy Spirit speaks through David,

"My hand will always be with him, my arm will make him strong.

'No enemy will be able to outwit him, no wicked man overcome him;

I shall establish his power over the sea, his dominion over the rivers.

So I shall make him my first-born, the highest of earthly kings."

And, this promise is fulfilled by Jesus, the Christ, of the lineage of David. The promised Messiah of Israel, and of all the Nations.



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This was and is a central claim of the Church. The Evangelist Matthew, in the Gospel he wrote, begins with these words: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

3. Our Gospel today immediately follows what is called the *mandatum*, or mandate, the wonderful moment at the Last Supper, after Jesus instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the ministerial priesthood, when He got up from table and washed the feet of His disciples. A sign of His self-emptying love. Then, he commanded us to do the same. Jesus said:

'In all truth I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him.

'Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly.' Love is a verb. Foot washing expresses what living a Eucharistic Life, a life of self-emptying love, is meant to look like.

Pope St Leo the Great once wrote of Jesus: "He took the nature of a servant without stain of sin, enlarging our humanity without diminishing his divinity. He emptied himself; though invisible he made himself visible, though Creator and Lord of all things he chose to be one of us mortal men. Yet this was the condescension of compassion, not the loss of omnipotence. So, he, who in the nature of God had created man, became in the nature of a servant, man himself."

Do we view ourselves as servants of the Lord? Do our lives reflect such a view? Our behavior? Are we loving with actions?



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