

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



The Path of Life

Ever-present God,
always near to us,
you invite us to recognize your presence
and remain close in your friendship.
Help us open our eyes to see you when you
draw near.
Open our ears to hear you teach your
divine plan.

Open our hearts to receive you fully in
the Eucharist.
And in doing so, show us the path of life.
As you accompany us, help us in turn,
to draw others to you.
Through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 23, 2023

Remain Close



Today's readings: Acts 2:14, 22–33; Psalm 16:1–2, 5, 7–8, 9–10, 11 (11a); 1 Peter 1:17–21; Luke 24:13–35. The Gospel story that recounts Jesus meeting disciples on the road to Emmaus mirrors our journey of faith. Just as Jesus drew near and walked with the disciples, Jesus continually draws near and accompanies us on our path of life. Sometimes we see him right away and welcome his company. Other times, like the two disciples, our eyes are prevented from recognizing his presence. Nevertheless, Jesus persists in making himself known to us.

The disciples' response to Jesus is "Stay with us" (Luke 24:29). And he does, just not in the way they expect. First, he unpacks the Scriptures with them. Next, as he did

at the Last Supper, he gives his real presence in the bread they share when they sit down at the table to eat together. So it is with us, every time we gather around our community table, the altar, Jesus stays with us. He becomes truly present under the appearance of bread and wine. We receive him into our very bodies, hearts, and souls.

As we journey through these Easter days, aglow with joy, God unceasingly pleads with us to "remain close." That can be done through keeping up the spiritual disciplines practiced throughout Lent. We can also remain close through being fully present at the celebration of the Eucharist, where Jesus draws near to us and invites us to spiritual union: communion.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 24

Faith in the One He Sent

Jesus offers the key to discipleship to the crowds following him from shore to shore, pleading for more miracles. Jesus instructs, “This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent” (John 6:29). There it is in a nutshell: have faith. How do we fuel ourselves as disciples? Daily prayer, faithfully attending Mass, reading Scripture, sharing our faith with others, and more. There is much to learn about the call to discipleship through the Scripture readings this third week of Easter. Attend closely. *Today’s readings: Acts 6:8–15; Psalm 119:23–24, 26–27, 29–30; John 6:22–29.*

Tuesday, April 25

St. Mark

Today the Church commemorates St. Mark, disciple and evangelist. Mark’s Gospel serves as a handbook for discipleship. We listen to the final words spoken by Jesus to his contemporary disciples and all who follow him forever after: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). The mission of the Church and our call as Christian disciples continues to be to share the good news about Jesus Christ in our words, action, gestures, and relationships. *Today’s readings: 1 Peter 5:5b–14; Psalm 89:2–3, 6–7, 16–17; Mark 16:15–20.*

Wednesday, April 26

Stand Up for Faith

The challenges of discipleship are on full display in today’s passage from Acts. The early Christians suffered terrible persecution and the scattering of their communities. Christians have faced persecution across the centuries to this day. Stories abound about courageous stands for faith in the face of grave threats. No matter what, the disciples of the early Church persisted and brought many more followers to faith, growing the Church against all odds. *Today’s readings: Acts 8:1b–8; Psalm 66:1–3a, 4–5, 6–7a; John 6:35–40.*

Thursday, April 27

Called to Teach

Philip demonstrates the call of discipleship to serve as catechist (one who “echoes” the faith). The eunuch seeks understanding and Philip responds, using the Scripture as his starting point, “telling him the good news of Jesus” (Acts 8:35). We are called to follow Philip’s example as catechists, teachers, parents, and friends. Start with the Scriptures and unpack the truths of our faith, persistently sharing the joy of the Gospel with all who will listen. *Today’s readings: Acts 8:26–40; Psalm 66:8–9, 16–17, 20; John 6:44–51.*

Friday, April 28

Called and Chosen

The reading from Acts tells the compelling narrative of the conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. Proclaimed in this reading are the flash of light from the sky, the fall, the voice of Jesus, three days that St. Paul was blinded, scales falling from the eyes, and the call to discipleship. Most of us will experience our call to discipleship without the drama and stunned witnesses. Called on the day of our baptism, we are continually invited throughout our life to follow Jesus and serve as his voice, hands, and feet. Reflect on your call today. Embrace it anew in solidarity with St. Paul’s faithful response. *Today’s readings: Acts 9:1–20; Psalm 117:1bc, 2; John 6:52–59.*

Saturday, April 29

St. Catherine of Siena

Today the Church lifts up St. Catherine of Siena, mystic, healer, peacemaker, unifier, scholar, and writer. Catherine is a model for all who seek to listen deeply for the will of God and courageously step out to steer the Church to her fullest potential. St. Catherine of Siena, pray for us. *Today’s readings: Acts 9:31–42; Psalm 116:12–13, 14–15, 16–17; John 6:60–69.*

