

Intercessions

For what or for whom should we pray?

Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother,
Present our prayer of thanksgiving to your Son.
Beg from Him the graces we need to be faithful disciples
who follow Him with enthusiasm and joy.
May our witness to the love of God bear fruit
in our archdiocese, parishes, homes and hearts.
Teach us to be God's joyful witnesses,
to radiate Christ in all we do,
so that all people might know, love and follow your Son
through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of April 9, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

(Acts 2:42-27, Second Sunday of Easter)

From The Joy of the Gospel

If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life. More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: "Give them something to eat" (Mk 6:37). (EG, 49).

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from Acts and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

In what ways is your Family of Parishes devoted to the teaching of the apostles, to communal life, worship, and service?

How might you lead your Family of Parishes to more fully live the vision presented in the two readings?

What other considerations come to mind?

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through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of April 16, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures.

(Luke 24:13-35, Third Sunday of Easter)

From The Joy of the Gospel

Today more than ever we need men and women who, on the basis of their experience of accompanying others, are familiar with processes which call for prudence, understanding, patience and docility to the Spirit, so that they can protect the sheep from wolves who would scatter the flock. We need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur. Listening helps us to find the right gesture and word which shows that we are more than simply bystanders. Only through such respectful and compassionate listening can we enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal: the desire to respond fully to God's love and to bring to fruition what he has sown in our lives. (EG, 171)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from the Gospel and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

How do you accompany others toward deeper faith?

How might you lead your Family of Parishes to grow as a community in which people journey together as disciples?

What other considerations come to mind?

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Lord's Prayer

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through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of April 23, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed: "Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?" Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call." He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.

(Acts 2:14a, 36-41, Fourth Sunday of Easter)

From The Joy of the Gospel

Pastoral ministry in a missionary style is not obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed. When we adopt a pastoral goal and a missionary style which would actually reach everyone without exception or exclusion, the message has to concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. The message is simplified, while losing none of its depth and truth, and thus becomes all the more forceful and convincing. (EG, 35)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from the reading from Acts and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

In what ways do you witness to the depth and truth of the good news of Jesus Christ?

How might you lead your Family to grow as missionary disciples?

What other considerations come to mind?

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Week of April 30, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

As the number of disciples continued to grow, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. So the Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, 'It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' The proposal was acceptable to the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. The word of God continued to spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly; even a large group of priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

(Acts 6:1-7, Fifth Sunday of Easter)

From The Joy of the Gospel

Though it is true that this mission demands great generosity on our part, it would be wrong to see it as a heroic individual undertaking, for it is first and foremost the Lord's work, surpassing anything which we can see and understand. Jesus is "the first and greatest evangelizer." In every activity of evangelization the primacy always belongs to God, who has called us to cooperate with him and who leads us on by the power of his Spirit. The real newness is the newness which God himself mysteriously brings about and inspires, provokes, guides and accompanies in a thousand ways. The life of the Church should always reveal clearly that God takes the initiative,

that "he has loved us first" (1 Jn 4:19) and that he alone "gives the growth" (1 Cor 3:7). This conviction enables us to maintain a spirit of joy in the midst of a task so demanding and challenging that it engages our entire life. God asks everything of us, yet at the same time he offers everything to us. (EG, 12)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from the reading from Acts and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

What helps you to maintain a spirit of joy in the midst of the demanding tasks of ministry?

How might you lead your Family to grow as people who desire, discern, and respond to the will of God?

What other considerations come to mind?

Intercessions

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so that all people might know, love and follow your Son
through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of May 7, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Christ to them. With one accord, the crowds paid attention to what was said by Philip when they heard it and saw the signs he was doing. For unclean spirits, crying out in a loud voice, came out of many possessed people, and many paralyzed or crippled people were cured. There was great joy in that city.

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 8:5-8, 14-17, Sixth Sunday of Easter)

From The Joy of the Gospel

The Church which 'goes forth' is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice...Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father's infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. The Lord gets involved and he involves his own, as he kneels to wash their feet. He tells his disciples: "You will be blessed if you do this" (Jn 13:17). An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the "smell of the sheep" and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. (EG, 24)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from the reading from Acts and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

How do you take the first step as a pastoral leader?

How might you lead your Family to "go forth" as a community of missionary disciples?

What other considerations come to mind?

Intercessions

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Lord's Prayer

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through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of May 14, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

(Mt 28:16-20), Ascension of the Lord)

From The Joy of the Gospel

My mission of being in the heart of the people is not just a part of my life or a badge I can take off; it is not an "extra" or just another moment in life. Instead, it is something I cannot uproot from my being without destroying my very self. *I am a mission* on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world. We have to regard ourselves as sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing. (EG, 273)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading from the reading from the Gospel and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

What is your mission as a pastoral leader?

How might you lead your people to recognize their mission and to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ?

What other considerations come to mind?

Intercessions

For what or for whom should we pray?

Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother,
Present our prayer of thanksgiving to your Son.
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Teach us to be God's joyful witnesses,
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through this life and into the next. Amen.



Week of May 21, 2023

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Enable us, we pray, almighty God, to proclaim the power of the risen Lord, that we, who have received the pledge of his gift, may come to possess all he gives when it is fully revealed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collect Prayer, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter)

Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from The Acts of the Apostles

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. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

(Acts 2:1-11, Pentecost Sunday)

From The Joy of the Gospel

At Pentecost, the Spirit made the apostles go forth from themselves and turned them into heralds of God's wondrous deeds, capable of speaking to each person in his or her own language. The Holy Spirit also grants the courage to proclaim the newness of the Gospel with boldness (parrhesia) in every time and place, even when it meets with opposition. Let us call upon him today, firmly rooted in prayer, for without prayer all our activity risks being fruitless and our message empty. Jesus wants evangelizers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God's presence. (EG, 259)

Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What in the reading Acts and the excerpt from The Joy of the Gospel strikes you?

How have you experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit as a pastoral leader?

How might you lead your people to open their hearts and lives to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, finding the courage to proclaim the Gospel with boldness?

What other considerations come to mind?