

Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026

We are witnesses.

Our faith and hope are in God.

Hearts burning within.

-rvb.

Quotations to ponder.

1. "I focus myself only on the present yet remain alert to what might come next." - Nicholas Sparks.
2. "Any new beginning is forged from the shards of the past, not from the abandonment of the past." -Craig Lounsbrough.
3. "Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one." – Albert Einstein.
4. "All endings are also beginnings. We just do not know it all the time." -Mitch Albom.
5. "Everyone you will ever meet knows something you do not know." -Bill Nye.
6. "My old grandmother used to say, 'Summer friends will melt away like summer snows, but winter friends are forever.'" -George R.R. Martin.
7. "No person is your friend who demands your silence or denies your right to grow." - Alice Walker.
8. "You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts." -Kahlil Gibran.
9. "The more I see, the less I know for sure." - John Lennon.
10. "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." - Nelson Mandela.

"It is in Jesus that I live, move, and have my being." Acts 17:28. Blessings of health, happiness, and holiness upon you and your loved ones.

Roger J. Vanden Busch

Third Sunday of Easter = Emmaus

April 19, 2026

We are witnesses.

Our faith and hope are in God.

Hearts burning within.

-rvb.

Reading 1

[Acts 2:14, 22-33](#)

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven,
raised his voice, and proclaimed:

"You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem.

Let this be known to you, and listen to my words.

You who are Israelites, hear these words.

Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God
with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs,
which God worked through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.

This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God,
you killed, using lawless men to crucify him.

But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death,
because it was impossible for him to be held by it.

For David says of him:

I saw the Lord ever before me,

with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted;

my flesh, too, will dwell in hope,

because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,

nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption.

You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence.

"My brothers, one can confidently say to you
about the patriarch David that he died and was buried,
and his tomb is in our midst to this day.

But since he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn an oath to him

that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne,
he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ,
that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld
nor did his flesh see corruption.

God raised this Jesus;

of this we are all witnesses.

Exalted at the right hand of God,

he received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father

and poured him forth, as you see and hear."

In this reading from Acts, this passage is the first of six major sermons in Acts. Peter shares with the listeners a Christian message worth more than imagined; yes, God raised Jesus from the dead according to his divine purpose and plan. On this remarkable Pentecost day, the Holy Spirit appears as **wind, fire, and proclamation**, reminding us of how much we need the Spirit's dynamic presence to work in ways that feel natural to us. Empedocles, the pre-Socratic philosopher famous for his theory of the four classical elements which are akin to the dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, May 24. Empedocles believed that all matter was comprised of four elements: **air, (wind-Pentecost) earth(creation), water (baptism), and fire (Pentecost)**. We are nature – we are air (we fill our bodies with it); we are earth (we will return to it); we are water (80% or more); and we are fire (energy driven). We are not distinct from nature, apart from it,

or as many stewards of it, rather, we are one with nature which we remember and celebrate on Earth Day, April 22, 26, Wednesday. I will be sending out a Lyceum on Earth Day this Thursday. April 16.

These elements are considered the fundamental building blocks of the universe, and their interactions are thought to govern all physical phenomena. Empedocles proposed that these elements are eternal and unchanging, and they mix and separate through two forces: Love and Strive. Peter highlights that love unites the community, while conflict leads to division.

Peter speaks with eloquence, conviction, and belief in the power and presence of the Resurrection. God released him from death and raised him, as death could not restrain him. Peter's homily is rooted and inspired by the prophecy of Joel as he shares with the community an historical and theological overview of the Christian "Kerygma" = Proclamation. Christian exegesis centers on Jesus, especially as understood through his Resurrection. As we approach the table, let us see our Savior and Lord beyond the bread and expressed in our overtures of love.

Responsorial Psalm

[Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11](#)

R. (11a) Lord, you will show us the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;

I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you."

**O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot.**

R. Lord, you will show us the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

I bless the LORD who counsels me;

even in the night my heart exhorts me.

I set the LORD ever before me;

with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

R. Lord, you will show us the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,

my body, too, abides in confidence;

because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,

nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

R. Lord, you will show us the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

You will show me the path to life,

abounding joy in your presence,

the delights at your right hand forever.

R. Lord, you will show us the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Reading 2

[1 Peter 1:17-21](#)

Beloved:

**If you invoke as Father him who judges impartially
according to each one's works,**

conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning,
realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct,
handed on by your ancestors,
not with perishable things like silver or gold
but with the precious blood of Christ
as of a spotless unblemished lamb.

He was known before the foundation of the world
but revealed in the final time for you,
who through him believe in God
who raised him from the dead and gave him glory,
so that your faith and hope are in God.

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

In this reading from Peter, Dr. F.B. Meyer remarks: “This epistle was the child of many tears and much sorrow.” Physical persecution was the reality of Christians when Peter wrote this epistle, therefore, his reference, “who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” Pursue, seek, and imitate Jesus Christ and not false, heretical, and blasphemous claims bombarded us daily. The following is an article By [Claire Moses](#), April 13, 2026 Updated 2:25 p.m. ET/The New York Times.

“Shortly after criticizing Pope Leo XIV in a lengthy social media post on Sunday, President Trump shared an apparently A.I.-generated image depicting him as a Jesus-like figure.

The image was posted on the president's account on his social media platform, Truth Social, but had disappeared from his profile by late Monday morning. Mr. Trump told reporters outside the Oval Office soon after that he had taken down the post.

The image had showed Mr. Trump dressed in white and red robes, with the president's hands emitting shining lights. His right hand was touching the forehead of a man lying on a bed in a hospital gown, evoking religious art that depicts Jesus healing the sick. (how ironic since millions will be denied Medicare and Medicaid).

The illustration was posted without commentary, less than an hour after Mr. Trump [criticized Pope Leo XIV](#) in another post, calling him "weak on crime" and "terrible for foreign policy." The pope, the first American-born pontiff to lead the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, has spoken out against the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran, condemning the "absurd and inhuman violence" unleashed by the fighting."

It is one of the paradoxes of our faith that we endure seeing him who is invisible and consequently we create and listen to the Golden Calf on Truth Social. It is recommended to read this chapter in total for the dimensions and surrounding

and presence of grace as we week and follow the Risen Christ, in and through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing!

[Cf. Luke 24:32](#)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us;
make our hearts burn while you speak to us.**

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

[Luke 24:13-35](#)

**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.
As they approached the village to which they were going,
he gave the impression that he was going on farther.
But they urged him, "Stay with us,
for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over."
So he went in to stay with them.
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 bread.

The story of Emmaus is captured in the often-quoted T.S. Eliot's words: "We shall not cease from exploration and at the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."

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.

Jesus, as he journeys with his disciples enlightens them by the breaking of the bread to transcend above human limitations to discover a connectedness, a unity, and a harmony with God. The disciples open the eyes of their heart and soul and realize that the risen Lord is in their midst. The disciples move through the profane and immerse themselves in the sacred. The profane is hand-dipped in the sacred.

As Meister Eckhart said, “The eye with which God sees me is the same eye with which I see God.”

Unity with God is a primary spiritual experience according to Mircea Eliade (Mircea Eliade was a Romanian historian of religion, fiction writer, philosopher, and professor at the University of Chicago). He argued that people approach the world as either sacred or profane. Anything—including food, dance, music, words, pets, and people—can be either objectified or seen as sacred. Thus, Jesus’ breaking of the bread is a sacred action which releases the sacred in all of reality. To treat people, places, and things as sacred is to treat them with honor, reverence, and respect. It is to recognize that there is a divine spark within us that can be ignited, appreciated, and enjoyed.

Jesus’ actions not only reveal the sacred and establish our relationship with God, but also foster connection among individuals, link us to the broader universe—from the earth to the cosmos—as well as to the vibrant world of plants and animals and the natural environment in which we serve as stewards of creation.

Emmaus affords the disciples the opportune moment and a window of opportunity in which the conditions are right: a spirit of openness, a

unity with life, in touch with the Spirit, transcending the ordinary, moving beyond the hard realities of life, and evolving as human beings. This is what is meant by the Hasidic saying: “The place where treasure can be found is in the place on which one stands.”

Once upon a time a loaf of bread fell from a baker’s basket. When it tumbled upon the pavement, several crumbs were scattered around and about the loaf of bread. Within a flash three starlings swooped in for the crumbs. One of them managed to snatch the minute pieces, while the other two flew away hungry. They overlooked the loaf, leaving it untouched. How often do we chase after the crumbs of life and leave the loaf to become stale and moldy? The loaf is the “Bread of Life,” the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone can satisfy our hunger. The Bread of life, it tastes like reality.

Final prayer: We have journeyed with Jesus in Word and in Sacrament, our eyes and hearts are and burn within us as we break bread with Jesus. Amen.