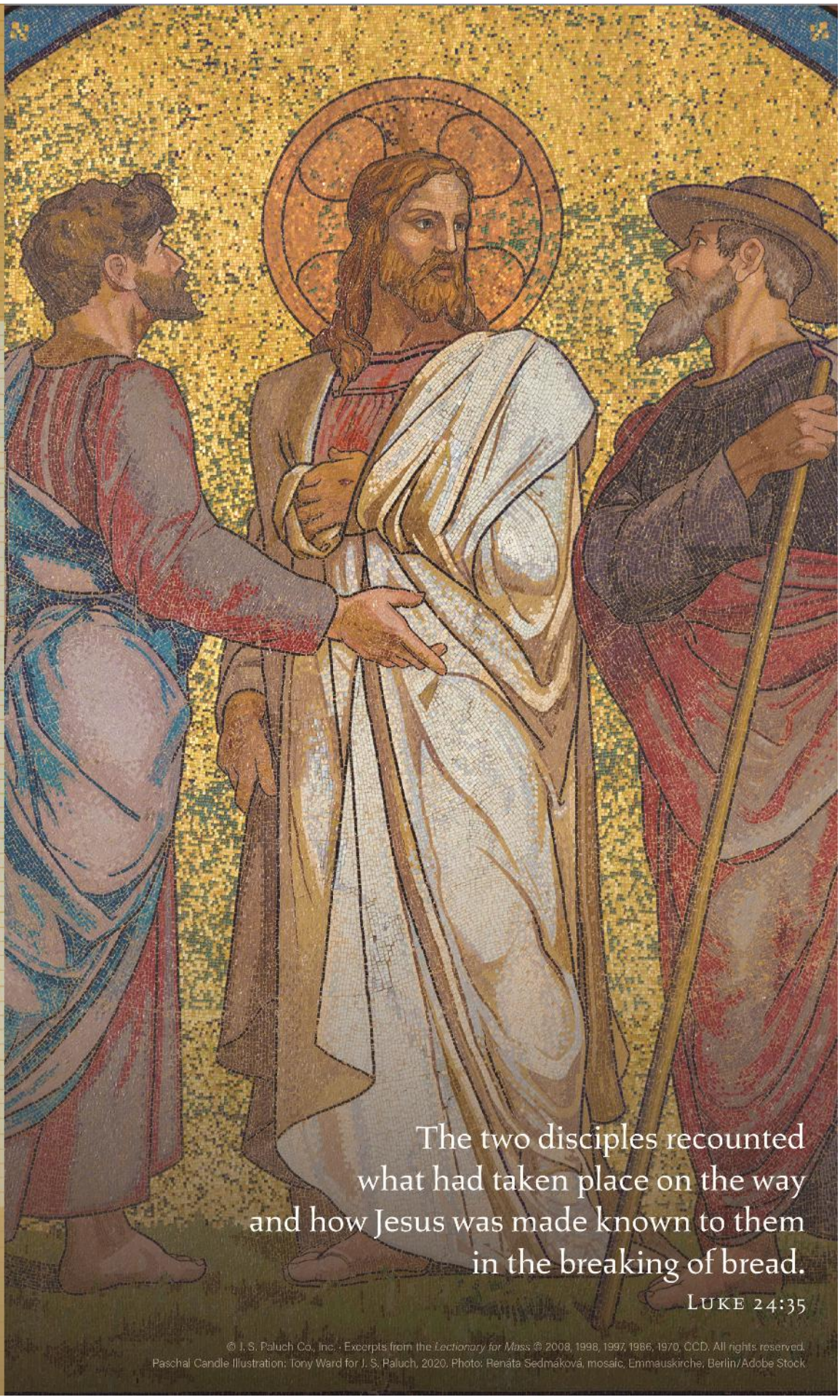
APRIL
26
2020



The two disciples recounted
what had taken place on the way
and how Jesus was made known to them
in the breaking of bread.
LUKE 24:35

THIRD
SUNDAY OF
Easter

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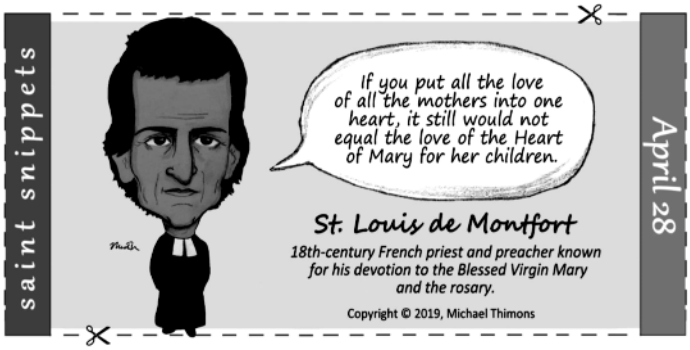
Saint Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

April 29

Imagine the pope receiving a young woman still in her twenties who addresses him as "my sweet Christ on earth," then orders: "Get back to Rome where you belong!" Amazingly, Gregory XI complied! Yet this was but one astonishing incident in the extraordinary life of Catherine of Siena, a truly unique medieval woman. Youngest of twenty-five children, Catherine refused marriage and became a Dominican Tertiary at sixteen, cloistering herself at home in contemplative prayer, austere penances, and mystical experiences, culminating in "spiritual espousal" to Christ. Then, incarnating the Dominican ideal of "passing on to others the fruits of contemplation," Catherine left her solitude to care for the poor, nurse the sick, comfort the dying, and bury the dead. Increasingly renowned for converting souls and healing bodies, she was sought after to broker peace during civil wars and Church schisms. All this, and like Jesus, whom she called "my Divine Spouse," she died at thirty-three! Four hundred letters and her spiritual classic The Dialogue inspired Paul VI to name her, together with Teresa of Ávila, the first women Doctors of the Church.
—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



God's Plan

Saint Peter speaks to us twice today. In the first reading, we hear an excerpt from his sermon on Pentecost; in the second, part of his first letter. Once a frightened, uneducated fisherman who often said just the wrong thing, now Peter is speaking what he knows to be true. Everything Jesus had said now makes sense. His death and rising were all part of God's plan, and our faith and hope can be centered on God.

Today's Gospel tells the story of Jesus' walk to Emmaus with two of the disciples. Frightened, sad, and confused, the two of them don't recognize Jesus, who tells them what we heard Peter say above: All this had to happen as part of God's plan. In the end, these disciples recognize Jesus as we are to recognize him—in the breaking of the bread.

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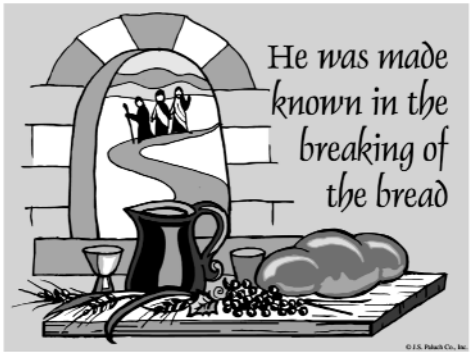
Readings for the Week

Monday:	Acts 6:8-15; Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30; Jn 6:22-29
Tuesday:	Acts 7:51 — 8:1a; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab; Jn 6:30-35
Wednesday:	Acts 8:1b-8; Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a; Jn 6:35-40
Thursday:	Acts 8:26-40; Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; Jn 6:44-51
Friday:	Acts 9:1-20; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 6:52-59, or, for the memorial, Gn 1:26 — 2:3 or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24; Ps 90:2-4, 12-14, 16; Mt 13:54-58
Saturday:	Acts 9:31-42; Ps 116:12-17; Jn 6:60-69
Sunday:	Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Ps 23:1-6; 1 Pt 2:20b-25; Jn 10:1-10

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Third Sunday of Easter
Tuesday:	St. Peter Chanel; St. Louis Grignion de Montfort
Wednesday:	St. Catherine of Siena
Thursday:	St. Pius V
Friday:	St. Joseph the Worker; First Friday
Saturday:	St. Athanasius; First Saturday



Today's Readings

First Reading — God has raised the crucified Jesus, who now pours forth the Holy Spirit upon us (Acts 2:14, 22-33).

Psalm — Lord, you will show us the path of life (Psalm 16).

Second Reading — Our faith and hope are in God, who raised Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 1:17-21).

Gospel — Through his words and in the breaking of the bread, the risen Christ made himself known to two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).

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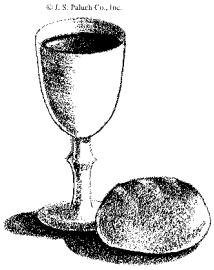
Treasures From Our Tradition

"Mystagogy," reflection on the Easter mysteries, is the chief task of these great fifty days, a "Pentecost," in other words, of grace and renewal. Every Sunday we have accounts of Resurrection appearances of the Lord, and sketches of the earliest efforts at being church.

Lent is described as a journey to the font, and Easter may be described in similar terms, since at the very beginning an angel tells the apostles that the Risen Lord "has gone before you into Galilee." Galilee, of course, was the place where Jesus did his finest work, his preaching, his healing, his gathering the lost and the marginalized to the table. At Easter, we hurry to catch up, putting our renewed baptismal promises to work in our own personal Galilees, our little worlds waiting for a word of grace, a healing, an act of pardon, an invitation to share a meal. The water often splashed on our Sunday assemblies in Eastertide reminds us: these are the golden, shining days of grace, days to nurture the heart, to speak to one another about things that really matter.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



Stay With Us Lord

Walk with us, Lord, along the road of resurrection! Explain for us, so slow to believe, the things that Scripture says of you. Break the bread of the Eucharist with us whenever we share our lives with our brothers and sisters. Stay with us each time night approaches and the daylight fades in our hearts!

—From Come, Lord Jesus by Lucien Deiss, CSSp, copyright © 1976, 1981, Lucien Deiss. Published by World Library Publications. p.168

Emmaus might as well be Brigadoon. We hear of it in this one story—and it's only in Luke—and then it disappears. The journey to Emmaus is one of the most beloved stories about Jesus, and yet the town is probably "mythical" in the truest sense. Like so much of life, this story is about the journey, not the destination. Running away from Jerusalem and their fears, probably going home in disillusionment, two of Jesus' disciples encounter a stranger on the road who, like a rabbi, is able to help them understand their experiences using his deep knowledge of scripture. Later, sharing a meal with him, they recognized the stranger as Jesus, and they return to Jerusalem to tell the others. How like our Mass—we hear the scriptures and an explanation of them, we share a meal, and then we go out to tell the good news.

The Stranger

Imagine meeting a stranger, a fellow traveler, who butts into the conversation you're having with your friend. The two disciples in today's Gospel are heading to Emmaus, seven miles away from Jerusalem, heartbroken and disillusioned. It's the day of Jesus' resurrection, but no one knew it when these two set out on their journey, maybe going home to resume their pre-Jesus lives because it seemed as if everything was over.

In the middle of trying to make sense of the tragedy, some eavesdropping guy asks them about their troubles. After telling their story, the disciples are amazed to find this stranger able to piece together the fragments of the broken image of their master using scripture as the glue. Then it happens—at dinner they recognize Jesus in the breaking of bread, just before he vanishes. With their hearts burning with love and inspiration, they run back to Jerusalem—at night—to tell the others their new story.

The Stranger/Shepherd

The stranger in this story who turns out to be Jesus is reminiscent of the Gospel images of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. He seeks out his "lost sheep" who have strayed from the faith community, and the experience of the risen Lord transforms them into perhaps the very first evangelists, sharing their Good News with their friends back in Jerusalem.

Are we transformed by the time we leave Mass? We should be! Our hearts should be burning within us from our experience of Jesus in word and sacrament. Yet how often life breaks our heart and clouds our mind! We stumble toward our own Emmaus, unaware that Jesus is with us. We are privileged to experience Jesus in every Eucharist through the breaking open of scripture and by the breaking of the bread. Like the disciples of the story, that transforming experience can compel us to go forth and tell everyone the Good News.

Today's Readings: Acts 2:14, 22–33; Ps 16:1–2, 5, 7–8, 9–10, 11; 1 Pt 1:17–21; Lk 24:13–35

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