

## Readings for the week of March 31, 2024

### Sunday:

Acts 10:34a, 37-43/Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 (24)/Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8/Jn 20:1-9 or Mk 16:1-7

### Monday:

Acts 2:14, 22-33/Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11/Mt 28:8-15

### Tuesday:

Acts 2:36-41/Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20 and 22/Jn 20:11-18

### Wednesday:

Acts 3:1-10/Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9/Lk 24:13-35

### Thursday:

Acts 3:11-26/Ps 8:2ab and 5, 6-7, 8-9/Lk 24:35-48

### Friday:

Acts 4:1-12/Ps 118:1-2, and 4, 22-24, 25-27a/Jn 21:1-14

### Saturday:

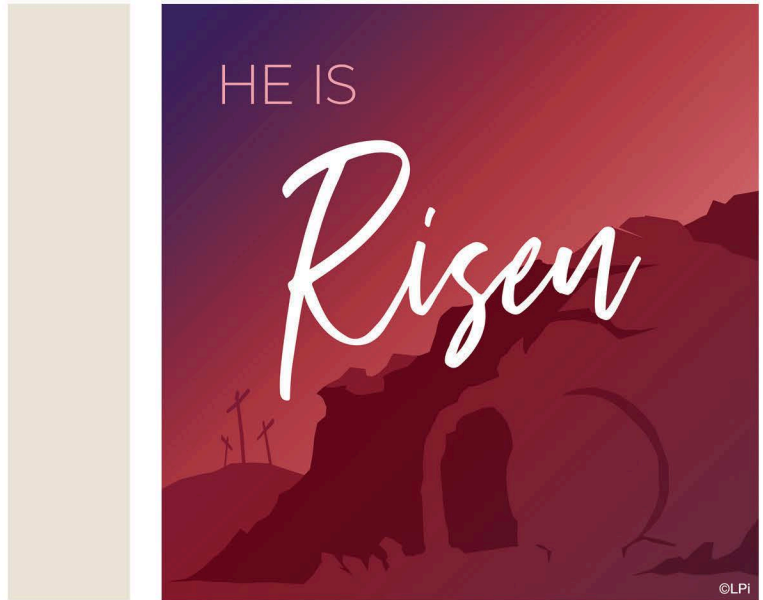
Acts 4:13-21/Ps 118:1 and 14-15ab, 16-18, 19-21/Mk 16:9-15

### Next Sunday:

Acts 4:32-35/Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24 (1)/1 Jn 5:1-6/Jn 20:19-31



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## Gospel Meditation

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Outside Chicago, there is a small cemetery in the woods behind Mundelein Seminary, where I was a student. One night I was exploring it. I looked up and was shocked to see an imposing seventeen-foot angel towering over me and preparing to blow a trumpet. Adrenaline rushed through me. I gasped and uttered, “Oh my God!” Quickly I realized it was in fact a massive bronze statue. I tried to calm myself down. But it still freaked me out.

As we begin to celebrate Easter today, this image might seem a bit unnerving. But please recall that for the first disciples on the morning of the resurrection, it was precisely that. It wasn't joyful at first, it was terrifying. It wasn't peaceful, it was unsettling. In that Jerusalem cemetery, something otherworldly had happened. Angels announced that he was no longer dead, but alive. They had blown their trumpets, so to speak, and Jesus had risen. Soon the disciples' shock in that dark cemetery would turn into joy.

We all have our own places of the dead, too, don't we? Deceased loved ones. Our tired patterns of blame. Relationships stuck in resentment. Indifference to the poor. Lost dreams. Despair about our future. Fear of sickness and death. These are our “cemeteries” where we don't expect much to happen. Today we enter — if we dare — those places with the disciples. See the mighty angel standing there, trumpet ready to blare!

— *Father John Muir*

## ( PRACTICING ) CATHOLIC

### What Would Mary Do?

This Easter morning, I am thinking of Mary Magdalene.

I want to know her state of mind as she approached the tomb in the darkness. Was she afraid? Was she thinking clearly? Was she tired? Had grief and trauma robbed her of her sleep the last two nights? What did she intend to do? Anoint Christ's body, yes — but what else? Kiss his hands, trace the markings where the lash had fallen upon his skin? Say goodbye? Weep? Despair?

What were the words she planned to whisper into the cold, empty darkness that morning, as she wept over God's body?

I don't know anything about her state of mind that Easter morning, except that I know she wanted to be with Christ. Perhaps that was all she knew, too. Perhaps she had no other thought, no other desire, than nearness to him. She didn't need to understand everything, and she didn't expect answers — she didn't dare hope for that.

But everything and everyone had fallen apart around her, and in Jesus' presence she knew her heart would be able to rest.

If you have ever been in the midst of a crisis in your life and found yourself pacing the floors of your house when no one else is awake, muttering the words to a prayer you know by heart, you know what Mary Magdalene felt. In those moments, we do not always feel God's presence. Sometimes, when we look for Him, we only see an empty tomb.

When these dark moments come, I pray you will remember the faithfulness of this great saint. Be like Mary Magdalene. Look for Jesus, always. You may not always find him, but he will always find you.

*"She ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, 'They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him.'"* — John 20:2

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

## Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

### Question:

What is spiritual communion, and do you need to be in a state of grace to receive it?

### Answer:

The practice of making a "spiritual communion" dates back several centuries and St. Thomas Aquinas described it as "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him." Traditionally, a prayer of spiritual communion has been used by those who are unable to receive sacramental communion because of health, inability to attend Mass, or who cannot receive communion because of grave sin. This practice has been encouraged by many saints and spiritual writers and most recently Pope Francis encouraged the practice when the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic prevented so many Catholics from taking part in the Mass or receiving sacramental communion.

Although the graces offered in spiritual communion are not the same as those offered in the sacramental communion of the Mass, this practice is still a powerful opportunity to express our desire for union with the Lord and to be united with Christ and the Church, even in an imperfect way.

# Weekly Prayer

## Sunday's Readings

### First Reading:

This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible,  
not to all the people, but to us,  
the witnesses chosen by God in advance,  
who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.  
(Acts 10:40-41)

### Psalm:

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.  
(Ps 118)  
Or: Alleluia.

### Second Reading:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above,  
where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. (Col 3:1)  
Or:  
Clear out the old yeast,  
so that you may become a fresh batch of dough,  
inasmuch as you are unleavened. (1 Cor 5:7)

### Gospel:

For they did not yet understand the Scripture  
that he had to rise from the dead. (Jn 20:9)

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## Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Even as the disciples saw the empty tomb and the discarded burial cloths, they did not understand what had happened. But they kept faith, trusting that the Lord was at work. Let us keep that same faith when we do not find God where we expect Him to be.

## Observances for the week of March 31, 2024

- Sunday:** Easter Sunday
- Monday:** Monday within the Octave of Easter;  
April Fools' Day
- Tuesday:** Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
- Wednesday:** Wednesday within the Octave of Easter
- Thursday:** Thursday within the Octave of Easter
- Friday:** Friday within the Octave of Easter
- Saturday:** Saturday within the Octave of Easter
- Next Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)



## Saint of the week

Venerable Francis-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận, was a cardinal from Huế, Vietnam. Imprisoned for his faith for 13 years, nine of which were in solitary confinement, he never stopped preaching, even from scraps of prison paper. Once released, he continued to serve the Church until his death.

## Prayer of Blessing

Dear Lord,  
Pour your blessings upon us today, we who trust in your name and call upon you. Send us your Spirit, enlighten our hearts, fill our lives with your abundance. Amen.

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

- Jn 20:8-9

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## Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

### First Reading

In his speech, Peter places much emphasis on his personal witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. To whom this week could you witness your faith in the resurrection of Jesus?

### Second Reading

Paul taught the believers in Colossae to anticipate the return of the resurrected Jesus. How does your family celebrate Easter Sunday?

### Gospel Question

Mary Magdala, Peter, and the Beloved Disciple were the first to experience the joy and mystery of the empty tomb. Do you recall when you first started believing in the resurrection of Jesus?



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He bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. - Jn 20:5-7

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