



# *Cathedral* WEEKLY

## THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

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# Cathedral WEEKLY

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OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

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Cathedral Parish Office: 217-522-3342  
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Mass Times: Saturday - 4:00pm; Sunday - 7:00am, 10:00am, & 5:00pm  
Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday - 7:00am & 5:15pm; Saturday - 8:00am  
Reconciliation: Monday through Friday - 4:15pm-5:00pm; Saturday - 9:00am-10:00am & 2:30pm-3:30pm; Sunday - 4:00pm-4:45pm  
Adoration: Tuesday & Thursday - 4:00pm to 5:00pm

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish offices or Sr. Francella at 217-522-3342 x 142.

## Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House  
Rector



## Walking into the Sunrise

On this Third Sunday of Easter, the Gospel keeps us on that first Easter Sunday, this time placing us on the road to Emmaus. We are not sure where the exact location of Emmaus was as there were multiple towns named Emmaus that are mentioned in the Scriptures. From St. Luke's Gospel, we know that the town was outside of Jerusalem about seven miles, not too far since these two disciples were able to make it there in one day's journey.

I am sure that most of us are familiar with story. Two disciples are walking to Emmaus. It is Sunday, two days after the Crucifixion. These disciples are heartbroken following Good Friday. Their world is further turned upside down because they have heard that Jesus has been raised from the dead. All of this they tell to the stranger who draws near to them on their journey and walks with them. The one who walks with them is no stranger, it is the Lord, but these two disciples are not able to recognize him.

There was an old interpretation of this story that said that the disciples were walking into the sunset, which obscured their sight. The Gospel tells us that it is the end of the day because the disciples invite this stranger to stay with them. While the setting sun may have obscured their sight, it was not what was preventing them from recognizing Jesus who was present to them. The disciples were grieving and rightly so, but their grief as well as possibly their own beliefs of who Jesus should have been or what He should have done was preventing them from seeing Jesus who was right in front of them. As these disciples pour their hearts out to Jesus, He in turn helps them to make sense of all that has happened, putting them back on the road to right spiritual vision which will be fully restored for them later that evening in the breaking of the bread.

The same can be true with us, maybe even right now as we push these days of uncertainty, frustration, fear and, yes, even grief. Life has a way of overwhelming us at times, not allowing us to see things or people clearly for what/who they are and this can happen in our relationship with the Lord. Just like with these disciples, Jesus is near to each and every one of us, whether we recognize Him or not. If we allow Him, our Lord will help us to approach the ups and downs of life with faith and hope. Making sense out of life doesn't always mean that we will understand the things that happen, but, as disciples, we will be able to place our frustrations, our brokenness, our grief, our fears, and our "whys" into the Lord's hands, trusting in His goodness.

May the grace of the risen Lord sustain us in these days until we are able to gather together again for the Breaking of the Bread, that is His true presence, when He will remind us in a very real way of the depth of His love for us. No matter what is happening in our lives or the world, if we are walking with Jesus, we are always walking into the sunrise.

*Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.*

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## Announcements

### Holy Mass Livestreams

Did you know you can join us at daily Mass from home? Mass is livestreamed every morning at 7:00am on the Cathedral Facebook page. All Masses are also added to the Cathedral website and can be found at [www.spicathedral.org/holy-mass-livestreams/](http://www.spicathedral.org/holy-mass-livestreams/).

You can also join Bishop Paprocki on Sundays at 10:00am for Sunday Mass. These livestreams can be found at [www.dio.org/live](http://www.dio.org/live).

### Spiritual Resources

The Cathedral website has many great resources for you to utilize during these uncertain times. Visit [www.spicathedral.org/](http://www.spicathedral.org/) to view them.

### Cathedral First Friday Concerts

At this time, the April, May, and June First Friday Concerts have been cancelled. We hope to resume our First Friday Concerts in August. In the meantime, you can enjoy familiar hymns, psalms, and tunes daily from our very own Mark Gifford. Comfort Music from the Cathedral can be found online on the Sacred Sounds Sacred Spaces Facebook page and on YouTube at Sacred Sounds Sacred Spaces.



## A Single Cry: How That Last Moment on the Cross Can Transform Our Prayer

In my prayer life, I am an exhaustor of options. I wish this meant that I spent hours in contemplation, examining my needs and God's responses as if

marveling at a diamond under a magnifying glass. What it really means is that God is often the last place I bring my fear and worry.

My anxieties first get stuffed away. I minimize and hide them, frustrated that they have once again appeared. When that doesn't work (it never does), I analyze. I put them to paper, turn them over in my mind, and attempt to calculate their causes and cures on my own. I do this because I fear that God's attention is finite. If I can only go to him once, my thinking goes, I had better make sure I get the "ask" right. I have a hard time remembering that God wants it all, that I can bring him the mess without first attempting to clean it up on my own.

This methodical and measured approach to comfort-seeking is contrasted by the impulsivity of my 2-year-old son. His cries immediately and urgently ring out, when he is hungry or tired, when he wants help or sympathy, and sometimes for no clear reason at all. Every need, large or small, is loudly and instantly expressed. His demands are exclaimed with the confidence that someone is hearing and receiving, pleas and prayers of their own right.

And out of my infinite love for him, I respond with equal urgency. I place his bicycle back upright on the sidewalk, I retrieve the book he is reaching for, or repeat for the third time that dinner is almost ready. In these moments, I surprise myself with my patience and tenderness. And I wonder, if the human response to these cries is so immediate and attentive, how much stronger and more vast, must the instinct to comfort be for God?

In observing my toddler, I notice what is often missing in my grown-up prayers: a single, instinctual cry. I too often rationalize and reason, dissecting my worry and fear into more manageable

pieces before it ever goes to God. When I found myself recently overwhelmed with balancing responsibilities of work and home during this time of quarantine, I parsed out to-do lists and turned to them wildly, looking to control whatever I could. I filled any time I might have had for being with doing, unable to separate out the symptoms of anxiety from their cause and therefore reticent about bringing them to prayer. The impulsiveness of a child buried within, a direct line to the almighty kinked by "shoulds" and "not yet's." This mess, I reasoned, was not yet worthy of God; mine was a thread too twisted and tangled for him to unknot.



We learn to temper and modulate emotion as we age, and this serves us in many instances. Yet the instinct to cry out is still wired within us. We are still those little people, somewhere deep in there. And when we struggle in prayer, I suspect it is those little people God simply wants to hear from. Just as a parent immediately responds to a young child calling for "Mama," God only needs to hear the call "Abba," the most tender "Daddy," to summon his full attention, grace, and love. It is with these simple cries that we humble ourselves and by doing so, grow ever closer to Christ.

I often think of Jesus' most poignant cry on the cross, visiting this moment as one of the rawest we see in Scripture. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" he cries out. This scene presents in full color, Jesus as man, and simultaneously gives us a model of uninhibited, guttural, instinctual prayer. A holy and productive cry, not unlike the hourly cries of a child. His is a prayer that is immediately and urgently human, and in a language we sometimes forget that God understands.

This Easter Season, particularly with the weight of our world's current crisis, how are we orienting ourselves as children of God and embracing the humility that comes with it? How can we reconnect with our ability to cry out? And when we sit in that gut-wrenching moment on Good Friday, how are we modeling our prayer after Jesus' own cry long past Easter Sunday?

*Christina Ferguson is a nonprofit and corporate senior manager, writer, and mother. Currently serving at Graham-Pelton, Christina has worked with Leadership Roundtable, Georgetown University, Catholic Relief Services, and Ashoka: Innovators for the Public. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy from Georgetown University and a Bachelor's of Science in Finance from Villanova University.*



## The Joy of the Easter Season

How does one write about the joy of the Easter season in the midst of a pandemic? That was the question rattling around my mind for the past few weeks. I don't want to be a Pollyanna with my head in the sand pretending

everything is OK. Everything is not OK. There is real suffering. But I also don't want to dwell on the negative because that helps no one.

It is important for us to give this season its due because it is the apex of Christianity. Without Jesus' death and resurrection, we have no chance of eternal life with God. Said Fr. Jean C.J. D'Elbee in *I Believe in Love*:

"The only real drama is the death of Jesus. All our own dramas are melted into the great drama of Calvary. But that is then followed by His Resurrection and ours."

### The Pinnacle of Our Faith

So I will attempt to balance between being respectful of the uncertain times and the joyousness of the Easter season. The fifty days from Easter to Pentecost are "characterized by the joy of glorified life and the victory over death, expressed most fully in the great resounding cry of the Christian: Alleluia!" (USCCB)

Yes! Alleluia! These days are to be celebrated as one long, glorious feast. But we start with death because we can only rise if we first die. *Memento mori* is the consideration of our own death.

During a pandemic who among us hasn't given at least a little more thought to our own demise? It's going to happen. This is one event we cannot avoid, yet we expend a lot of our resources trying to keep it as far away as possible. Even though we as Catholic Christians believe in heaven, most of us are in no rush to get there.

My husband works with elderly sisters. They are largely unperturbed by this virus because they are OK with their death and ready to go. They have faith that heaven is way better than earth. This is born of a lifetime of Easter seasons. At Easter and during the Easter season, we return to that pinnacle of our faith: Christ's passion, crucifixion, and resurrection. During Holy Week we immerse ourselves in his suffering. This year especially, we can unite our suffering to his. We let his agony pierce our hearts. We feel the emptiness on Good Friday, the sorrow of knowing our Savior died and not only did he die a horrible, painful, barbaric death, he died because he loves us. He died to expiate our sins.

### Dance with Joy!

When God created the world, heaven and earth were united. The pipeline between the two was clear. Adam and Eve enjoyed a loving, comfortable relationship with the Creator. Along galloped sin and that pipeline was destroyed. It was replaced, said St. Catherine of Siena, by an impassable, roaring river. We were unable to cross it on our own. We were separated from God by sin and death. There was no hope. Imagine if that were still the case during this pandemic. People are dying and there is no hope for eternity, just separation from God.

But it's not like that and that's why we must rejoice. Jesus' cross is the bridge that wiped out sin and death. It is the bridge to heaven. It is where our hope comes from.

"Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit." (CCC 1817)



If only we could forget each year, the splendorous surprise of Sunday, when he rises victorious over death. If we could enter into Holy Week not remembering the happy ending, we could celebrate even more joyfully and genuinely because Easter is a wild feast. We should be dancing in the streets, exclaiming loudly like fools, dizzy in our happiness. Jesus' resurrection changed everything.

### It changed everything.

We don't need to fear our death because Jesus conquered death. Thanks to him we can live in eternal happiness in heaven with our Father.

So how can we be joyful this season? How can we *not*? Our future has even more question marks than usual. We are holed up in our homes. Some of us have lost jobs. Our cities are ghostly quiet. We don't know when it will end and what normal is going to look like when it does, but we know that Jesus is risen and we have a whole season of fifty days to celebrate.

Yep, life is confusing right now but we must be a hopeful people. I say we give this season what is due. We celebrate, we feast, we hope, we bask in the love of God and we place our trust in him. Alleluia! He is risen!

*Merridith Frediani's perfect day includes prayer, writing, unrushed morning coffee, reading, tending to dahlias, and playing Sheepshhead with her husband and three teenagers. She loves leading small faith groups for moms and looking for God in the silly and ordinary. She blogs and writes for her local Catholic Herald in Milwaukee.*

## Hope to Dispel the Darkness

*“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. (Luke 24:13-18)*

In October 1979, the South American nation of El Salvador entered into a civil war that not only allowed the rise of oppressive military dictators, but which also led to the systematic murder and oppression of tens of thousands of Salvadorans, particularly poor farmers.

Among those who lost their lives defending the rights of the poor and the Church was the archbishop of San Salvador, Saint Oscar Romero (d. March 24, 1980), and four American missionaries:

Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and lay missionary Jean Donovan (d. December 2, 1980). On November 16, 1989, a group of six Jesuits, along with their housekeeper and her daughter, were shot to death in their shared home because of their support of the poor. The total number of those murdered, raped, and tortured is known only to God.

In the year after the death of Archbishop Romero, the Jesuits of El Salvador began a bi-weekly publication known as *Letter to the Churches*. The newsletter re-told the stories of those who suffered from violence and terror at the hands of the military junta and its guerilla soldiers.

In one issue, *Letter to the Churches* shared the testimony of Ismael, a lay catechist, who shared some of his experiences of living with the poor in a war zone, accompanying the people as they fled into the mountains to try to find safety. There, hiding beneath the branches of trees, with stars providing their only light (because the people were afraid to light candles), the people would retell and reflect on the stories of the Gospel. Recalling those terrifying days, Ismael wrote:

*We suffer a great deal here. Our bodies are wasting away, and we have many worries. The old people and the children we have to carry concern all of us. We have no money, no clothing, no shoes. But God will look after us. We are going to suffer in this life. These are only the birth pangs, but joy will come. The consoling words of Christ will wipe away every tear. No more will there be crying, pain, worry, or death—everything will pass away. Our hope is to know God. (Quoted in Oscar Romero: Reflections on His Life and Writings by Marie Dennis, Renny Golden, and Scott Wright)*

Ismael’s ability to find comfort and even hope in Christ is a powerful witness to us in these Easter days, particularly on this Third Sunday of Easter as we hear the story of the journey to Emmaus.

Saint Luke presents Cleopas and his companion fleeing Jerusalem after the death and burial of Jesus and, although they had heard the testimony of the women that Jesus had been raised from the dead, their disappointment and grief would not allow them to believe such an amazing story. Their despair is captured in one simple but profound statement: “We had hoped...”

And yet, Jesus was there with them, walking with them through their grief, helping them recognize how God had been—and continued to be—at work in the violence of Good Friday and the silence of Holy Saturday. As Father James Martin, SJ, reflected in his book *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*: “The Risen Christ tells the two

disciples that hope is never dead, and nothing is impossible with God. Then he shows them this by revealing himself fully. Seeing this, they are filled with joy. Hope has been rekindled and so their hearts burn. Their first impulse, as always in the Gospels and with us, is to announce the Good News.”

The hope and promise of the Resurrection on that Easter Day was able to dispel the darkness of grief and despair for Cleopas and his friend, just as it did for Ismael and his companions as they hid in the forest in those terrible days in El Salvador.

This is what we celebrate as we continue to celebrate in this Easter Season: The Resurrection shows us that there is always hope and that Christ remains with

us, journeying with us as we walk our pilgrim path: “Easter is a shout of victory! No one can extinguish that life that Christ resurrected. Not even death and hatred against him and against his church will be able to overcome it. He is the victor!” (Saint Oscar Romero).

### An Invitation for Deeper Reflection

- When have grief, doubt, disappointment, or pain clouded your vision, making God seem far away?
- How is the Good News of Easter inviting you to a new hope, even in these days of quarantine and COVID-19?
- When have you experienced Christ “walking beside” you? In another person? In the words of Scripture, a hymn, or poem? How did it feel when you recognized that he was with you?

*A Benedictine monk for nearly 11 years, Br. Silas Henderson, SDS, is an author, retreat leader, and catechist, and former managing editor of Deacon Digest Magazine and Abbey Press Publications. You can find more of Br. Henderson’s blogs at [www.fromseason2season.blogspot.com](http://www.fromseason2season.blogspot.com).*



## Stewardship Activity

### Stewardship of Prayer

May your people exult forever, O God,  
in renewed youthfulness of spirit,  
so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption,  
we may look forward in confident hope  
to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

### Stewardship of Treasure - April 19th

Envelopes:	\$3,837.00
Easter Envelopes:	\$890.00
<u>Maintenance:</u>	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total:	\$4,827.00

March EFT: \$22,321.85

Did you know you can still make a gift online? If you would like to extend a special gift to the Cathedral, please visit <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>. We appreciate your generosity!

## Sunday Reflection

### Mystagogy on the Emmaus Story

("Mystagogy" = to be led to, to encounter mystery)

Two dejected disciples, abandoning Jerusalem, encounter Jesus in the Breaking of Bread. With burning hearts, they return to the community of believers to recount this meeting. That is what Sunday Mass and Communion of Blood and Body does for us. In returning week after week to the faithful believers, to our fellow parishioners, we meet the Risen Lord in the Body of Christ the Church.

- With what does my heart burn this Easter Day?
- Why do I keep coming to Sunday Mass and receiving Body and Blood?
- What will this sacred Meal strengthen me, impel me to do?

## Give Yourself Completely

The early days of the first Christian community were not easy by any measurement. Jesus had been executed, and his disciples had to be discreet so as not to meet a similar fate. Jesus was now risen, but the truth of his resurrection was not accepted by all.

However, the depiction of that early community in Acts 2:42-47 would lead someone to believe it was the opposite situation. We are told of community life where people lean on each other and share great joy. They ate and prayed together, and many wonders and signs were occurring to lift the community and bear witness to the power of Jesus Christ. They were disciples living out their faith, and it was their strong sense of stewardship that made all this possible in the face of threatening Roman and Jewish powers.



Today, we find the Church in a new turmoil. Increasing secularism, abuse scandals, and a lack of true fidelity place us once again in a time that is not easy. A friend of mine likes to say that any challenge of sin we encounter in the Church has its origin in a lack or misunderstanding of the stewardship way of life. We create our burdens by not using our gifts wisely and by turning inward selfishly.

Could we use the story in Acts of the early Church to help us today? If we begin with the decision to give of ourselves completely to God and His people, will we become agents of change? There is only one way to find out.

*Tracy Earl Welliver is currently the Director of Parish Community and Engagement for LPI where he manages the company's coaching and consulting efforts. He has spoken on and coached dioceses, parishes, and individuals on stewardship, engagement, strengths, and discipleship all over North America, Australia, and New Zealand.*