

ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
**Prayer Gathering for the Third Week of Easter**

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**God of the journey,  
you approach us without fanfare, cloaked in disguise.  
Remind us to stay alert to your presence in our lives,  
and fill us with a desire to find you in our conversations, our solitude,  
and in the breaking of the bread.  
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

*"Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way  
and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

**When have you looked back over your journey and realized that God was with you,  
though you didn't realize it at the time?**

*"The two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to  
them in the breaking of bread."*

**Looking back, how have you "recognized him in the breaking of the bread"?**

POSTED RECENTLY

One night I dreamed that I was walking along the beach with the Lord.  
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.  
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand:  
one belonging to me and one to the Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,  
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,  
especially at the very lowest and saddest times, there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.  
"Lord, I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,  
there was only one set of footprints.  
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, you would leave me."

God whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you  
Never, ever, during your trials did I leave you.  
When you saw only one set of footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."

("Footprints," author unknown)

DISCUSSION

**What has it meant in your life to be "carried" by God?**

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

That all of us may look to the Eucharist as our sure way to encounter God; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

That our leaders may decide our path forward with wisdom and prudence, asking themselves at every moment: "What does heaven want for God's children?"...we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For all who look back with regret, heartbroken over lost opportunities; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For families who experience ruptured relationships and estrangement; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For first responders and all who risk their lives for strangers; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For the times we feel that God is not walking beside us when we need God so desperately; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For the sick, the scared, the vulnerable, the unemployed, the dying... and for all who are alone when they need support most; we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

For our beloved dead... .. . . .

...we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer**

OUR FATHER

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.  
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.**

CLOSING PRAYER

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.**

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

## READING 1

A reading from the first letter of Peter

Beloved:

If you invoke as “Father”

the One who judges impartially according to each one’s works,

then conduct yourselves with reverence

during the time of your sojourning<sup>1</sup>,

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...

[the One] who raised him from the dead and gave him glory,

so that your faith and hope are in God.

The word of the Lord

*Thanks be to God.*

*1 Peter, chapter 1*

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<sup>1</sup> “Sojourning” is another word for “journeying” ... “during the time of your journey.”

## READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

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 replied:

*"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."*

[So] 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... 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?"*

The two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.