

Sunday, May 03, 2026

Embrace life

People say the darnedest things when someone dies. They say, “God took him from us” or “God must’ve had a reason.” But according to our faith, Jesus promised to rescue us from death. When, because of age or illness or injury, our mortal bodies can no longer sustain God’s precious gift of life, Jesus promised to “come again” and snatch us from the jaws of death. The Bible says, “In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died” (Wisdom 3:2). God had a reason for giving us life. And Jesus has a reason for saving us from death. Death is not part of God’s plan for us. Only life—life everlasting.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 2:4-9; John 14:1-12 (52). *“I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be.”*

Monday, May 04, 2026

The power of words

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz died at age 100, soon after publishing *The Wild Braid: A Poet Reflects on a Century in the Garden*. In it Kunitz describes falling in love with language as a child. Finding new words in a family dictionary, he learned meanings but loved even their sounds. “I would go out into the woods behind our house and shout my latest discovery and listen to the words reverberate. I considered it my duty to give my new words to the elements, to scatter them.” Do we forget the sheer power of our own words that carry not only meaning but are formed by our very breath, our very selves? The words we “shout” into the world, which we have a duty to shout, are incarnations of our own kindness, joy, compassion, and forgiveness.

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 14:5-18; John 14:21-26 (285). *“Whoever loves me will keep my word.”*

Tuesday, May 05, 2026

Look for the open door

Saint Paul had reason to suspect his attempt to bring Christ’s Good News to the Greeks was ill-fated. Even after making a cripple walk again and astounding the crowds, the Jews stoned Paul and left him for dead. All we are told at that point is that he simply stood on his feet and proceeded into the city of Derbe to continue preaching. Perplexingly, when Paul and Barnabas then return to the church in Antioch, they celebrate the door of faith now open to the Gentiles. That is a peculiar “open door” indeed that leaves one stoned and left for dead! But when failure appeared nearest at hand, Paul found opportunity. Today, find in each of your failures and misfortunes an opportunity for God’s grace to fill in.

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286). *“They called the Church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.”*

Wednesday, May 06, 2026

Put your anger on ice

Marlene Dietrich, actress/singer of the past century, once said during a television interview that when a woman forgives her man, “she must not reheat his sins for breakfast.” Though it is not always possible to forget an offense, we can forgive and let go of the anger. This power comes from our communion with Christ,

who forgives all our sins. When we abide with Christ, we produce the fruit of patience and peace that comes from God alone. The temptation is to reheat an old hurt. But we can resist that temptation and live in the love of God.

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287). *“Remain in me, as I remain in you.”*

Thursday, May 07, 2026

We’re all on the same team

The phrase “us and them” separates humanity into teams of rivals. But what happens when those teams change sides? When Saint Paul, apostle to the Gentiles, talks about “us,” he means his Jewish brothers and sisters. For Paul, “them” refers to non-Jewish followers of Jesus—which curiously now means, mostly, “us.” Heaven’s view of history and who’s who is quite fuller than ours. Isn’t it time to build more bridges and to see as God sees?

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 15:7-21; John 15:9-11 (288). *“He made no distinction between us and them, for by faith he purified their hearts.”*

Friday, May 08, 2026

How do you picture Jesus?

The New Testament is filled with images of Jesus—from a good shepherd to a mother hen, from a royal king to a dear friend. Writers, theologians, mystics, and artists also have given us many images that can help us deepen our own experience of God and stretch us in new ways. While some images may surprise us, they can also spark a new way of thinking about how God is present in our everyday life. At different times one image might speak to us more than another. Which image of Jesus do you most relate to today? Which do you find challenges you and opens you to new ways of experiencing God?

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289). *“I have called you friends.”*

Saturday, May 09, 2026

It’s not a popularity contest

When beloved and famous citizens die these days, an immediate outpouring of public grief attends their passing. Something like a secular shrine is formed as multitudes contribute flowers, candles, stuffed animals, and final messages to the one they so admired. Nothing like this happened at the death of Jesus, of course—few who loved him even dared to be seen with him at the end. At his death, Jesus was despised by the powerful and disowned by the powerless. Those who followed him most nearly met a similar end: folks like Stephen, Peter, and Paul. Remember, winning the esteem of others is not the goal of Christian living, rather it is giving witness to the truth.

EASTER WEEKDAY

Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290). *“If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first.”*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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