

Devotions for the Second Week of Easter – April 13-17, 2026

Monday of the second week of Easter – Prayer for the Week

Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

In the season of Easter, the Christian greeting is "He is risen!" and the response is "He is risen indeed, Alleluia!"

But if you meet your neighbor on the street today and they are worried about their job, their family, their friends who have suffered some tragedy or are just worried because this world seems so messed up at the moment, this might not be well received. They might respond, "That was 2000 years ago, what has He done lately? He doesn't seem to be getting us out of this mess!" Perhaps you don't need a neighbor to say it to you. Perhaps you or someone in your home are asking that question and wondering where Jesus is today and what He is doing.

Ancient Christians differentiated themselves from their pagan neighbors by saying that their God was alive. By that, they seemed to have meant that Jesus was present and doing things, unlike the mute and motionless idols which occupied the pagan temples of that time. They lived in a current relationship with Jesus who was present in their lives for their blessing. We need to remember this truth which inspired our ancient ancestors in the faith.

One of the reasons Jesus has risen from the dead is so He could take care of you. You are the sheep of His fold, after all. He is the Good Shepherd. He has risen for a purpose, and you are the object of his affections. Please don't imagine that means all goes swimmingly. Some of those early Christians sang Jesus hymns on their way to martyrdom. Jesus did not show up with a legion of angels to snatch them from the lion's jaws. Or did he? He who had been to hell and back and suffered death at the hands of Roman soldiers, walked with them every step of the way to face that martyrdom. And when they died, he was there to snatch them from the clutches of death itself, bringing them to resurrection glory. Make a list today of all the things that Jesus is doing for you right now. Trust Him and confess Him in word and deed.

Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 5:27-42

²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and

forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

³³ When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁴ But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁵ And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. ³⁶ For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷ After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸ So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!” So they took his advice, ⁴⁰ and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Sometimes the people in the Bible seem so strange to me. Peter stands up to corrupt and unreasonable authority. I always appreciate that sort of bravery. He must obey God rather than men. He suffers for it. I can honor him for that, just as I might honor others who have been beaten or imprisoned in a quest for justice and fairness. It is the final two verses of this passage from Acts that really get to me. The disciples were rejoicing in the opportunity to suffer for the name of Christ.

There is a part of me that wonders if we don't have medication for this sort of thing. Would we think today that Peter and the rest of the disciples are a little psychotic? Probably. Yet, there is also something very true and good about them which I also see. Yesterday, in these devotions, we prayed that our lives and words would confess Jesus as Lord and God.

I am sure that Peter and his fellow Apostles who left the Sanhedrin rejoicing had never imagined that they would bear witness to Christ with bruises and lacerations. How will you bear witness? God has plans for you, too. Sometimes bearing witness has a relatively low cost. Your neighbors watching you get up and go to church on Sunday are seeing you bear witness to Jesus. Sometimes, however, our witness does come at a cost. Sometimes it has cost people their lives. What happens may not always be pleasant in the moment, but He finds the way to weave you and me, our lives and our songs into the praise of angels and archangels.

Wednesday of the Second Week of Easter - Psalm 148

¹ Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights!

² Praise him, all his angels;
 praise him, all his hosts!

³ Praise him, sun and moon,
 praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD!
 For he commanded and they were created.

⁶ And he established them forever and ever;
 he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth,
 you great sea creatures and all deeps,

⁸ fire and hail, snow and mist,
 stormy wind fulfilling his word!

⁹ Mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰ Beasts and all livestock,
 creeping things and flying birds!

¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹² Young men and maidens together,
 old men and children!

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 for his name alone is exalted;
 his majesty is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for his people,
 praise for all his saints,
 for the people of Israel who are near to him.

Praise the LORD!

I read an article by an emergency room physician in Chicago during the early days of the recent pandemic. She spoke of a patient at her hospital, a man she called Patient C. As they worked to save his life and as his respiration was failing, they made the decision to intubate him with a respirator. Patient C. was a kind man who turned to the doctor and said, "I am in your hands, I trust your decision. If this is what you think is best, let's do this." Being intubated this way requires that the patient be sedated. As the drugs took effect, the last thing the man saw was the

physician, eyes staring at him over her mask. For the next 12 days the doctor labored for others and prayed for this man whom she had handed over to the ICU.

What joy when she heard that this gentle man had been extubated. He had survived. The doctor went to the step-down unit to visit, encapsulated in protective equipment, once more only her eyes showing. The man was alone, his own wife was unable to visit. The doctor said that her heart, which felt like it had been beating 100 beats per minute for the past several weeks, suddenly slowed down. Here was why she had become a doctor. He smiled in recognition, and they spoke.

It was not all sweet. This physician had seen many die. She had served for over 20 years and seen heart attacks and gunshot wounds. Now her days were overwhelmed with very sick people who might not survive. But here, sitting in a room with a man who had been a stranger to her a few weeks before, she found a place to praise God. The psalmist today runs throughout the creation, from sun, moon, and stars to kings and princes, from mountains and hills to old men and youths, from them all, including you, he calls for praise. It might be counterintuitive, but often in hard days, praise comes easier. Those things which we took for granted are seen with new eyes and appreciated. Heed the psalmist today – Praise the Lord!

Thursday of the Second Week of Easter - I Peter 1:1-9

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

I know a fellow who is quite wealthy. He is a hard-working fellow and quite smart about business, but most of his money came not from his own success, but through an inheritance. He got it simply by being born to the right folks, no skill involved, no deep business acumen, just born. I do not begrudge him this wealth. I have my own inheritance from my own parents. But I

think about him when I hear what Peter says here. We are born again through Christ's resurrection to an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance.

I received many things from my parents, not the least was my Christian faith, my genetics, my sense of humor, and also some money. Some of the things our parents pass along to us are good and others are not so good. My acquaintance inherited a serious heart condition from one of his parents. Our heavenly inheritance, however, is always good. God is the very definition of life. He doesn't just have life he is life. Our life, that thing that makes us alive and not a corpse, has always been a gift from him, a gift which Sin would take away. But God, having forgiven sin, gives us the inheritance of life itself. Someday my friend will die. But that inheritance will still be his. He will live again.

Peter notes that this is not always easy to see. Being a Christian doesn't mean that everything goes well for us all the time. But even when things are rough and we are "grieved by various trials," we too can rejoice. Our enemy cannot take this life which is ours in Christ. It is our eternal, unfading, and imperishable inheritance. Christ has risen from the dead – the inheritance is ours.

Friday of the Second Week of Easter - John 20:19-31

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

There is so much in this story of the first appearances of Jesus to his disciples. I think a score of devotionals could be written could be written about these verses.

Consider vss 19-21. Jesus shows up and says “Peace be with you.” He shows them his wounds and they are glad. Again, he says, “Peace be with you.”

I could use some peace right now. My world is a frightening place and anxiety feels like the only appropriate response. My phone, with its constant barrage of news and videos only makes things worse. It knows that I am almost addicted to the latest bit of horror that the world can dish out and so its algorithm feeds me more and more. If I dwell on it too much, I am not feeling peace. Should I just shut off the news and retreat into the sanctum of my home? Is that even safe? Is it the responsible thing to do when so much evil reigns?



Notice that Jesus says “Peace to you” twice. And notice that two things are sandwiched in the middle of the peace which Jesus offers: his wounds and the disciples’ joy. Would you like to have peace? Gaze upon the wounds of Christ and rejoice. The resurrected Jesus died for you. There is nothing that the world can do which is bigger than that. No political turmoil, no economic downturn, no, not even death can surpass what he has done for you. Therein lies calm joy for you today.

Alternative Devotion for Friday

There is so much in this story of the first appearances of Jesus to his disciples. I think a score of devotionals could be written could be written about these verses.

Consider carefully just vs. 26-27. Jesus appears even though the doors and windows are latched and locked. I have often heard people speak of how Jesus can pass through walls. But I think that misses the point entirely. When he shows up the disciples do not need to tell him about Thomas' unbelief. He walked up to Thomas and confronted him about it. You see, I don't think Jesus passed through the locked doors like some vapor.

He was there the whole time. He was there when Thomas disbelieved. No one had to tell him about it. Jesus doesn't so much enter the room as he appears to them. He was there with them the whole time, just like he promised (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus is in your room too. Has he seen your moments of disbelief and doubt? Surely, he has. Does he love you, nonetheless? Absolutely! He did not punish Thomas but helped him. Likewise, this Jesus whom Peter acknowledged yesterday that we do not see but yet we love, trust, and rejoice in, is not absent from our lives. This Jesus is right here with us. Are you afraid right now? Let him hold your hand and calm your heart. He is here and he loves you and nothing can snatch you from his hand.

