LIVING GOD'S WORD

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Know "With Certainty"

APRIL 26, 2026

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 2:14a, 36-41;
1 Peter 2:20b-25; John 10:1-10

The response Peter sought when he preached the Good News was "know with certainty" that the crucified and risen Jesus is Messiah and Lord, the "shepherd and guardian of your souls" (1 Peter 2:25). Jesus called himself the gate: "Whoever enters by me will be saved." Jesus is the Good Shepherd who calls his own by name, leading them to pasture. He described in one line what he will do for all who believe in him: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." This is what we are called to believe with certainty.

Easter is the season of light, of power, of new life, of victory, of the outpouring of the Spirit. Here we take to heart the Good News that the apostles preached in their Pentecost enthusiasm. Easter invites us to be caught up and carried along in the faith-hope-love tidal wave which swept across the world after Jesus burst out of the tomb. Easter helps us to surrender ourselves to Jesus and celebrate our risen life in every action, every word, every thought on each extraordinary/ordinary day. The key to our Easter life is this: "Know with certainty" that God has made both Lord and Messiah the Jesus who was crucified.

In the power of this belief, we make the double response which flows from believing with certainty that Jesus is Lord: "Repent and be baptized." Because we experience in our hearts the power of the risen Jesus, we confidently rebuild and restructure our lives from the ground up. We live now as his Body, offering our own bodies as living sacrifices, pledging that wherever we are, whatever we are doing, we are ready to do Jesus' will, enabling him to live and act in us, carrying out the work of his Kingdom. Our repentance is not just a turning away from what is bad, not even a simple dedication to doing good works. It is a total surrender of our lives, our being, our every choice and action to the risen One now living within us, making our flesh his own. Our repentance is a consecration, a commitment to living and acting on God's level because we have been baptized into sharing divine life in Jesus Christ.

Because we experience in our hearts the power of the risen Jesus, we confidently rebuild and restructure our lives from the ground up.

Because we are now one with Jesus, the Christ, the anointed Lamb of God, we know with certainty that we have been anointed as he was. With Jesus we are anointed as sacrificial victims, bearing witness in love to the truth of God's love for the world and for each person in it. Jesus showed that love by putting the salvation of every single person ahead of his own interests in this world. "When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten" (1 Peter 2:23). Jesus did not protect himself by retaliating. "But he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly." He allowed sinners to overcome him; he loved them back. By enduring evil with love, he loved evil out of existence. Je-

sus sends us to do the same. By our wounds, accepted in love, our world will be healed.

Do we know, are we willing to affirm "with certainty" that this Jesus who was crucified has been raised up as Messiah and Lord? Do we know and are we willing to affirm beyond any doubt, that when we are crucified by injustice, hostility, betrayal, physical and emotional abuse or bodily injury and death and yet we respond with love as he did, that we are allowing Jesus to triumph in us? Do we believe that by speaking the truth courageously in love, without defenses or threats, by challenging evil with no weapons except truth and love, we are letting him reign in us as Messiah and Lord? Do we believe that in union with him we will "have life and have it abundantly"?

Reflecting on This Week's Gospels

Fourth Week of Easter

> ***Pray daily:*** *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, though your people walk in the valley of darkness, no evil should they fear; for they follow in faith the call of the Shepherd you have sent for their hope and strength. Attune our minds to the sound of his voice and lead our steps in the path he has shown that we may know his strength and enjoy the light of your presence forever. Amen.*

Monday: John 10:1-10. Jesus says that sheep recognize their shepherd's voice and will follow it. How is Jesus speaking to you today? Through whom? What obstacles do you encounter in trying to follow that voice?

Tuesday: John 10:22-30. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me." Do you recognize Jesus' voice as the voice of your Shepherd, always leading you to safety and greater life? How do you listen for his voice?

Wednesday: John 12:44-50. "I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness." How can you shed more of Christ's light on the realities of your daily life at work, at home and when you recreate?

Thursday: John 13:16-20. "I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he." What does it mean to you that the words of Scripture are the words of God? That the example of Jesus is the way God chose to live as a human being?

Friday: John 14:1-6. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me." How does the event of the Resurrection give you comfort when you are afraid? Do you think about the power shown in Jesus' Resurrection when you are anxious?

Saturday: John 14:7-14. "Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father." What is Jesus doing in you, through your situation and gifts, that he could not have done in his own circumstances or in the body he received from his mother?

Living This Week's Gospels

As Christian: If you believe "with certainty" that Jesus is the Way, put some visible reminder of this every place where you make choices: in your home, car, workplace, TV room or where you socialize.

As Disciple: If you believe "with certainty" that Jesus is the Truth, put the Bible on your nightstand and tell God you will never go to sleep without reading at least one line.

As Prophet: If you believe "with certainty" that Jesus is the Way, decide each morning before you set about your day's business what actions that day will bear witness to his values.

As Priest: If you believe "with certainty" that Jesus is the Life, share his life with someone else by a word or act of love.

As King: If you believe "with certainty" that Jesus is the Lord, try to improve something, however small, in your environment this week.

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