



April 19, 2026 | The Third Sunday of Easter

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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St. Elizabeth's
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Pocahontas, VA 24635

St. Mary's
1122 Farmer Street
Richlands, VA 24641

St. Joseph's
1007 Independence Rd.
Grundy, VA 24614

What is the proper etiquette for the Sign of the Peace?

“The celebration of the Mass is regulated by a document called the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), so in order to answer most questions about practices such as postures or positions at the Mass, the GIRM is a good place to start.

Regarding the laity’s action at the Rite of Peace, GIRM No. 82 says: “As for the sign of peace to be given, the manner is to be established by Conferences of Bishops in accordance with the culture and customs of the peoples. It is, however, appropriate that each person offer the sign of peace only to those who are nearest and in a sober manner.”

The current GIRM was promulgated in 2002, but a 2014 circular letter was sent to conferences of bishops throughout the world by the Holy See’s Congregation for the Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments. In response to that, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said this, which gets most fully to the heart of your question: “No ‘official’ expression of peace has ever been stipulated for the dioceses of the United States. Perhaps the most common form for the exchange of peace in this country is shaking hands, but the diocesan bishop may encourage other forms as well for cultural or other pastoral reasons.”

ROAD TO EMMAUS

By Fr. Renier Supranes

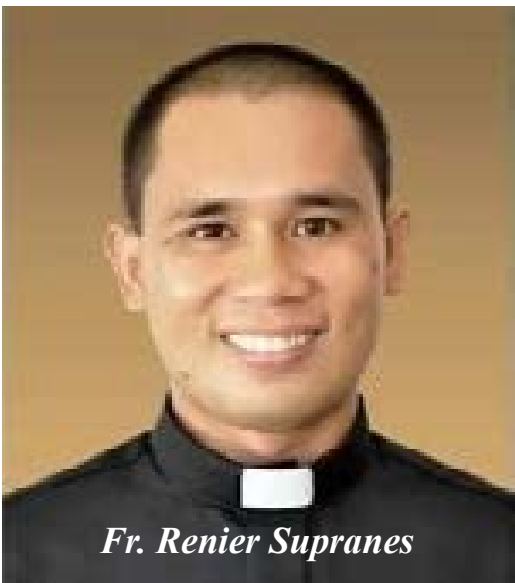
Today’s Gospel tells us the moving story of the encounter between the Risen Lord and two of His disciples who were on the road from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. The event happened on the very day of the Lord’s resurrection. The two disciples were leaving Jerusalem because they were likely discouraged, confused and grieving for everything that happened to Jesus. They had just witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus. They were hoping that Jesus will redeem Israel, but with His death, their expectations seemed shattered. Along the road to Emmaus, the two disciples went from discouragement and loss to great joy and discovery, from sadness in the absence of the Lord to joy in His presence.

We can relate the experience of the two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus with our experience of the Mass. The two disciples received a precise revelation of the two main parts of the Mass namely: the sharing of the scriptures and the breaking of the bread, that is, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

At the beginning, the two disciples were discussing all that had happened. They were confused and disappointed as they tried to figure out what it all meant. When we attend the Mass, we can easily be in a similar state. We have all sorts of things in our minds: recent personal experiences, family problems, sickness, disappointments, etc. But Jesus approaches and enters into our world. As we listen to the readings at Mass, Jesus is speaking to us, but we sometimes fail to recognize Him. All we see are the readers and the priest. If we listen closely and ponder the Word and allow it to sink deeply into our hearts, our hearts will also “burn within us”. The Word of God is no ordinary word. It is a fire which penetrates our hearts with transforming power and gives us divine light.

The Word of God opens our hearts to another great gift: the “breaking of the bread” or the Holy Eucharist. At Emmaus, when Jesus broke bread and gave it to the two disciples, “their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.” Jesus revealed His presence but then vanished, to teach them that He is present in a new way, in the Holy Eucharist. When we are before the Eucharist, and especially when we receive Holy Communion, Jesus gives us the gift of His Real Presence. He is as present to us as He was to the disciples in Emmaus.

After their discovery of Jesus’ presence, the two disciples ran back to Jerusalem as missionaries who told the good news to everyone. We, too, are called to be missionary disciples. After we experience the presence of the Lord in the Word and in the Eucharist, we are being sent forth to share to others the good news that He is alive. Jesus is truly with us always, especially in the Holy Eucharist.



Fr. Renier Supranes

Luke 24:13-35

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. He asked them,

"What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him,

"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. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see."

And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then 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, he gave the impression that he was going on farther.

But 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?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

PASTOR

Fr. Renier Supranes

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OFFICE STAFF

Bookkeeper: Lydia St. Peter

Secretary: Eric Burns

OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Fri 9:30am – 2:30pm

Please call the parish office to make arrangements for the **Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony** as well as funerals. **Reconciliation** is available from 30 minutes before a scheduled Mass.

MASS TIMES

SATURDAY

4pm – St. Joseph's

6pm – St. Mary's

SUNDAY

9am – St. Elizabeth's

11:30am – St. Theresa's

DAILY MASS

Tuesday 10am – St. Theresa's

Thursday 10am – St. Mary's

Friday 10am – St. Theresa's

Monthly First Friday Adoration at St. Theresa's 10am w/Mass

Cover image:

Matthias Stom, *Supper at Emmaus*, circa 1632-1639

Christ's Self-Emptying

Fr. Brian Mullady, *simplycatholic.com* (03/25/2024)

Jesus, “though he was in the form of God, / did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. / Rather, he emptied himself, / taking the form of a slave, / coming in human likeness; / and found human in appearance, / he humbled himself, / becoming obedient to death, / even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:6-8).

This Scripture passage from St. Paul summarizes the humility of Jesus Christ and his self-emptying, also called *kenosis* in Greek.

The question of Christ's self-emptying is very urgent today as there are many who question the traditional doctrine taught by the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) concerning the nature of Christ. This applies even to professional teachers of theology, who sometimes teach that Jesus is just a good man who is engraced in the same way any other human being is and therefore is an adopted, not a natural, son of God. There are two basic clarifications which must guide any truly Catholic understanding of Christ. The first concerns what the union of God and man is in Christ. The second concerns how the first doctrine is reflected in certain actions of Christ — for instance, His cry, “My God, My God why have you forsaken me?” from the cross (see Mt 27:46).

God and Man

When God became man in the Christ, this was a true self-emptying in humility. But what was exactly given up? Did Jesus cease to be God? What did He assume? Where does the union of God and man take place?

The attempt to explain this belief puzzled the early Christians. They used terms taken from Greek philosophy to attempt to explain the mystery in which they believed. Not that they could exhaust this mystery. That is not possible as it is a part of the ineffable wisdom of God. But since this mystery is received in a human mind, the early Christians used philosophy as a tool to help clarify what they actually believed in. The principle terms they used were: person, nature and relation.

In Greek philosophy a nature is a principle of a kind of activity which sets one being off from another. The way a dog acts differs from a tree. This demonstrates that a dog has certain powers different than a tree and so is a different being, possessing a different nature. The individual who possesses a na-



ture which is shared by all the individuals of its species is called a hypostasis. An individual who possesses a rational nature (a hypostasis with a rational nature) is a person.

Once the divinity of the Word was determined, the question arose as to how the Word was present in Jesus of Nazareth. Many attempted to explain this by saying that God and man were united in nature in Christ. This did not do justice to what Christians believed or the Christ to whom they prayed. If the union took place in nature, Jesus would have to be really God and only seem to be man, really man or seem to be God, or be a strange monstrous mixture of the two. The heresy which teaches that the union takes place in the natures is Monophysitism, which derives from the Greek words *mono*(one) and *phusis* (nature). This would mean that Christ would, in some sense, be just a good man somehow identified with God, or only seem to be man.

Instead, the Council of Chalcedon taught that the union takes place in the person. The divine person of the Word who shares the divine nature with the other two persons, at a certain point in time, took unto himself a new way of acting, a human nature, but not a human person. God was not changed by this action, but the world was. What had been called to union with God in nature by a quality of being called sanctifying grace became a new and unheard of relation, and the world was united to God in the person of the Word. The union in person is thus called “the hypostatic union,” which is a grace unique to Christ. Christ does not assume a human person, but only a human nature, a perfect and complete one nonetheless. He has a human soul, intellect, will, passions and body.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church recounts for us the definition from Chalcedon: “We confess

that one and the same Christ, Lord, and only-begotten Son, is to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation. The distinction between the natures was never abolished by their union, but rather the character proper to each of the two natures was preserved as they came together in one person (*prosopon*) and one hypostasis” (No. 467).

This means that the emptying of Christ in being consisted in His will to join human nature to His actions as a divine person, to act through it and to only hide the glory of His divine nature so that He might suffer the passion: “What he was, he remained; what he was not, he assumed” (Catechism, No. 469).

The one divine person, Jesus, thus acts in two natures. In Scripture, He even demonstrates this because He speaks in both natures as one person often in the same verse. “Now glorify me [human nature], Father, with you, with the glory that I [divine nature] had with you before the world began” (Jn 17:5). This new relation between God and the world is a sheer grace, and it is also a miracle.

St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians continues the passage about the nature of the self-emptying: “God greatly exalted him” (2:9). Does this mean Christ was not exalted in being before the Passion? Often, things are said to occur in Scripture when they come to our knowledge. Before the Passion, Christ rarely demonstrated His divinity. But after the Passion, in the Resurrection and the Ascension, His divinity becomes clearly demonstrated to the apostles. They come to know it.

What Did He Give Up?

One of the difficulties with this position is how one can dogmatically explain the cry of Christ from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Many theologians today hold that Jesus was forsaken because He had no idea He would rise from the dead, that He threw himself into a kind of existential darkness characterized by faith and just accepted the meaninglessness of life. So, His experience of death would be the same as ours.

This is impossible. In what sense can Christ be forsaken on the cross? He cannot cease being the Word of God within the Trinity. This is His personhood. He cannot cease being the Word made flesh. This union is permanent once embraced. He cannot sin as this would war against His mission, which is to atone for our sins by His perfect obedience on the cross.

The traditional teaching of the Church is that

Christ enjoys the beatific vision from the moment of His conception in the womb of His mother in His human intellect. This is not formally defined *de fide*, but has always been considered *proxima fide*, meaning that to deny it entails so many problems for other doctrines that it must be affirmed. If Christ were not to have this and therefore have faith on the cross, this would mean that He would have to merit it for himself as man and, in principle, could sin. In fact, faith is never attributed to Christ in His earthly life, and the ability to sin would again compromise His mission.

The only way Christ can be abandoned by His Father on the cross, then, is by external protection. Many times Christ’s enemies sought to put Him to death, beginning with Herod, when Christ was a baby, and God protected Him. The dogmatic difficulty here is resolved if one considers that “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” is the opening verse of Psalm 22 (RSVCE). If one reads the whole psalm, it is very far from a cry of despair and existential angst. The psalmist does suffer intensely, but the psalm ends with a hymn of thanksgiving to God and confidence that God will vindicate his sufferings. This will, of course, happen in the resurrection of the dead. Moreover, Thomas Aquinas thought that no one could freely give himself to the kind of suffering Christ embraced on the cross unless he knew about the resurrection of the dead.

The self-emptying of Jesus then is only a self-emptying in being in the sense that God should choose to take to himself a human way of acting and suffering. Psychologically this emptying does not involve sin. It is not even done in faith.

Rather, in this suffering Christ experiences the greatest pain possible. This is the case physically because His body was more sensitive than a normal body as it was perfectly fashioned by the Holy Spirit. He therefore suffers more in the bruises, the scourging, the nails and the hunger and thirst.

He also suffers mentally because he personally experiences all the human sins which will be committed and have been committed in the history of the human race. He knows these through the beatific vision He has on the cross. He does not allow this vision, or His glory as God, to enter into His lower self precisely so He can suffer the Passion. He feels abandoned by God, but knows internally He is not. This is a cause of acute pain both physically and mentally. But the internal union of the hypostatic union is preserved.

So, in Jesus, we see how much God loves us. We should therefore be caught up in love of the God we cannot see (see Roman Missal, Christmas Preface).

Mass Intentions

04/18 SATURDAY

4PM For the healing of Rayburn Minton

6PM Billy Hylton †

04/19 SUNDAY

9AM Andrew Satmary †

11:30AM Elisabeth Repp †

Stewardship of Treasure

CHURCH	ATTENDANCE	OFFERINGS
St. Joseph's	12	\$250
St. Elizabeth's	21	\$852
St. Mary's	24	\$1,010
St. Theresa's	60	\$2,772
Total	117	\$4,884
Budgeted Yearly Collection		\$110,372
Yearly Actual Collection		\$113,334
Amount Over/Under Budget		\$2,962
Outside Donations		\$3,266

OUTSIDE DONATIONS—THANK YOU!

St. Michael, Glen Allen, VA : \$1,500

Virginia Beach, VA Donor: \$100

St. Francis, Staunton, VA: \$1,666

BACKPACK DONATIONS:

Richlands Donor: \$200

BISHOP'S APPEAL UPDATE:

28 donors contributed \$16,281.00 of our \$9,310.00 goal

OUTREACH DONATION:

St. Michael's, Glen Allen, VA: \$3,750 to be split by 5 outreach programs

GOOD FRIDAY:

St. Mary's: \$30

St. Theresa's: \$50

BUILDING & MAINTENANCE FUND

St. Joseph's: \$25

St. Mary's: \$185

St. Theresa's: \$340

EASTER:

St. Mary's: \$5

St. Theresa's: \$70

Please Pray for

Nick Ulate	John Shumate
Frannie & Rayburn Minton	Doug Vance
Sue Bailey	Annette Pike
Christian Lambert	Sharon Mullady
Shane Neal	Veronica Ross
Pete Belcher	Allen & Melody James
Lucas Boyd	Joseph Romeo
Chris Jessie	Sara Griffith
Junior Aiken	Juanita Sharrock
Lara Marshall	Bob Robinette
Taylor Brown	Rick & Beth Wright
Jim Shumate	Bernie Spencer
Christian Marshall	Brenda Pierallini
Alice Godin	Michael Kroll
Roger Empson	Cecilia Miller
Dreama Ritter	Randy & Cathy Bolling
Chris Lambert	Amanda Reese
Clinard Coleman	Betty Jones
Rosalie Rocchetti	Lori Palombo
Joe & Yvonne Blevins	Beth George
Amelia Proffit	Richard Baxter
Maurice Law	Nora Newell
Bill & Jo Testerman	Lisa Pitzer
Josh Cornwell	Michael Todd Robinette
Galileo Molina	Linette Street
Beth Cieversten	Jeff Mullins
Sherri Clanton	Helen Hardee
Linda Smith	Nio Tolliver
Steve Hankins	Jeannie Pruett
Darrell Cole	Paul Danko

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Parish News & Events

2026 Annual Diocesan Appeal Update

Our Parish goal for the 2026 Appeal is \$9,310.00. As of this week, 28 donors have donated and we have surpassed our goal. All members of our four churches are still encouraged to participate. Let's show the Richmond Diocese that we truly are one family, working together to make the most of this opportunity!

Envelopes are available at the entry table, just return it to the office and the bookkeeper will forward. You may also scan the QR code below:

**Scan here to donate to the
Annual Diocesan Appeal**



Children's Liturgy

Children's Liturgy has begun. It will be held every Sunday at St. Theresa's at 10am.

Baptism Schedule

April 18, 2026 (4:00 PM @ Saint Joseph's): Matthew Gilliam, Maria Viers, Jonathan Viers II

Birthdays & Anniversaries

April 20: Vincent Shumate, Donnie & Lisa Neal (anniversary)

22: Tonya Hylton, David & Angela Dalton (anniversary) | **23:** Garrett Milhoan | **24:** George Noll

***“Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us;
make our hearts burn while you speak to us.”***

- Cf. Luke 24:32

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LORETTA HAMMOND

VOTE NO

NOVEMBER 3RD
STOP THE EXTREME ABORTION AMENDMENT



If passed, it would establish a radical, so-called “fundamental right” to abortion in the Virginia Constitution.

ABORTION IS A FUNDAMENTAL TRAGEDY NOT A “FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT”

The amendment is **dangerously vague** and creates risky loopholes for unregulated abortions at any time, **even up until birth**, by **unlicensed abortion providers**, threatening the health of mothers and healthy babies.

The amendment lets the government remove the right of parents to be included in healthcare decisions with their children, **creating family division and conflict**.

THIS IS AN EXTREME, RISKY AND DEADLY AMENDMENT

Virginia's current laws already protect healthcare for miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, and serious complications. This amendment adds nothing to women's rights to protect their health. In fact, it puts women's health and safety at risk.

For additional information and resources to help stop the Extreme Abortion Amendment, visit vacatholic.org/Amendment or scan the QR code.



Prayer for Protection

from the Extreme Abortion Amendment



Almighty and Eternal God,
we thank you for the sacred gift of every human life
created in your image and likeness.

We pray for an end to the grave evil of abortion and ask
that you protect our Commonwealth of Virginia from the
dangers of the proposed extreme abortion amendment.

Grant wisdom and compassion to our legislators, healing
to all who have been wounded by abortion, and courage to
your people to speak the truth in charity.

Hear the prayers of your children as we pray and fast in
reparation for sins against the human person. Inspire
parents to defend their children by opposing this resolution
which can jeopardize the authority, rights and
responsibility you have entrusted to them.

Through the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude, may our
Shepherds be bold in their defense of the unborn, leading
us in this critical hour, as we educate and engage all
citizens of Virginia to vote against the amendment and to
persevere in protecting all human life.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God
and Mother of the Church, come to our aid.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

vacatholic.org/Amendment