## Questions for Reflection and Sharing

What connections or new insights did you gain from the readings?

How do you experience the challenge of the Gospel at this time?

How does your Family of Parishes live out the command of Christ to “proclaim the Gospel” to the world?

## Intercessions

For what or for whom should we pray?

## Lord’s Prayer

## Closing Prayer

Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother,
Present our prayer of thanksgiving to your Son.
Beg from Him the graces we need to be faithful disciples who follow Him with enthusiasm and joy,
May our witness to the love of God bear fruit in our archdiocese, parishes, homes and hearts.
Teach us to be God’s joyful witnesses, to radiate Christ in all we do, so that all people might know, love and follow your Son through this life and into the next.
Amen.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

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*Pastoral Planning for Our Third Century*

# April 2026

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray, (Pause for silent prayer)
that all people might know, love, and follow your Son
through this life and into the next. Amen.

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that your Church may always remain
that holy people, formed as one
by the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
which manifest to the world
the Sacrament of your holiness and unity
and leads it to the perfection of your charity.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever. Amen.

## Reading from Sacred Scripture

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

When Jesus had risen, early on the first day of the week,
he appeared first to Mary Magdalene,
out of whom he had driven seven demons.
She went and told his companions who were mourning and weeping.
When they heard that he was alive
and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

After this he appeared in another form
to two of them walking along on their way to the country.
They returned and told the others;
but they did not believe them either.

But later, as the Eleven were at table, he appeared to them
and rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart
because they had not believed those
who saw him after he had been raised.
He said to them, "Go into the whole world
and proclaim the Gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:9-15 (Saturday in the Octave of Easter)

## From Pope Leo XIV's General Audience, March 11, 2026

Unified in Christ, Lord and Saviour of every man and woman, the Church can never turn inwards on herself, but is open to everyone and is for everyone. If believers in Christ belong to it, the Council reminds us that "All men are called to belong to the new people of God. Wherefore this people, remaining one and unique, must extend to the whole world and to all ages, so that the intention of God's will may be fulfilled, who in the beginning created human nature as one and wants to gather together his children who were scattered" (*LG*, 13). Even those who have not yet received the Gospel are therefore, in some way, oriented towards the people of God, and the Church, cooperating in Christ's mission, is called upon to spread the Gospel everywhere and to everyone (cf. *LG* 17), so that every person may enter into contact with Christ. This means that in the Church there is, and there must be, a place for everyone, and that every Christian is called to proclaim the Gospel and bear witness in every environment in which he or she lives and works. Thus, this people shows its catholicity, welcoming the wealth and resources of different cultures and, at the same time, offering them the newness of the Gospel to purify them and to raise them up (cf. *LG*, 13).

In this regard, the Church is one but includes everyone. A great theologian described it thus: "The unique Ark of Salvation must welcome all human diversity into its vast nave. The only banquet hall, the food it distributes is drawn from all of creation. The seamless garment of Christ, it is also – and it is the same thing – the garment of Joseph, with its many colours". [3]

It is a great sign of hope – especially in our times, traversed by so many conflicts and wars – to know that the Church is a people in which women and men of different nationalities, languages and cultures live together in faith: it is a sign placed in the very heart of humanity, a reminder and prophecy of that unity and peace to which God the Father calls all his children.