

Spiritual Reflections for April 2026

Please choose a reflection for review:

Light from the Empty Tomb, On Being, and a Prayer for the month of April

Light from the Empty Tomb

*Adapted from: San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller – **Light from the empty tomb** - April 2014*

The Easter message affirms the greatest hope in the human heart that “God's love is stronger than all evil, even death.”

In his document “The Joy of the Gospel,” Pope Francis, however, addresses the threat of the loss of joy in the hearts of believers when he writes, “There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.”

Lent is a time of repentance and sacrifice, the purple of penance and the austerity of abstinence. However, it is only a path intended to lead us to the empty tomb of Easter, which is the ultimate affirmation of the loving and merciful image of God that Jesus revealed.

Right after his resurrection, Jesus encounters the disciples and says, “Peace be with you. As the Father sends me, so I send you.” This greeting was consistent with his earthly ministry, as Jesus taught us God's peace becomes ours when we make the connection between the joy of Easter and our calling to reach out to the poor, the suffering and the marginalized.

Here again, let us consider the words of Pope Francis who tells us to allow our celebration of the resurrection to free us from our own self interests: “We are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being.... For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others?” When the world hears the greeting, “Happy Easter,” may they welcome it with a spirit of joy and hope.

Reflection questions:

1. Which words speak most clearly to your own spiritual growth in this Easter reflection?
2. How does our work as Vincentians liberate us from ‘narrowness and self-absorption’?

- Submitted by Bro. Greg Horgan, Scarborough East Particular Council President

On Being

Adapted from Pádraig Ó Tuama writing in On Being

It is Easter week. This week, we remember the events from Thursday's meal to Friday's torture to Saturday's silence and Sunday's mystery.

In this blog, Pádraig o Tuama is remembering a lonely and fearful time in his 20's when he lived with symptoms of an undiagnosed disease and how he came to experience comfort during an Easter retreat with the Taizé community in France.

As he tells it, "on Holy Thursday, a brother spoke to the pilgrims gathered for a few minutes after breakfast. He noted how Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke, "I have earnestly desired this meal." He didn't paint a picture of a Nazarene who ran to the arms of Roman torture willingly, but he depicted a character who believed enough in a way of life to take that way of life to the death. The monk spoke about how Jesus lived the last days of his life in a way that was faithful to the life he'd always lived — calling enemies and dispossessed ones "friends," having concern for his mother, accepting help from a Cyrenian stranger, looking for moments of life while life itself was draining away."

Listening to this reflection, Pádraig feels a deep sense of relief and how on "that Easter Sunday I cried. Not because of some miraculous resurrection. I had eight long years to wait before my health began to improve. I cried because, in the words of an old monk, I heard an echo of an understanding that went beyond words, and, in that echo, there was companionship."

He holds on to that awareness so that "each year on Easter Sunday, I find myself moved. Not because there is a happy ever after ending to all of our stories. It is quite clear that there is not. I am moved because of a sacred echo of a hope that there is solidarity for those who feel like we inhabit a small hell of our own experience. The hope of Easter doesn't damn this hell with a bleaching light. Rather this hope enters and squats with us. The celebrations of Holy Week for me are not about cataclysmic resurrections, but about being moved to follow in the life of the Nazarene, bravely entering into loneliness with a small spring of consoling company."

Reflection questions

1. How does this Easter story relate to your own experience of God's presence?
2. Is this Easter story helpful to our understanding of the Vincentian companionship that we try to provide on home visits? <https://onbeing.org/blog/an-easter-sunday-a-sacred-echo-solidarity-in-a-small-hell-of-our-own/>; April 24, 2011

- Submitted by Sr. Yvonne Gray Spirituality Committee/St Anselm's conference

Prayer for the month of April

Divine Creator,

As the earth awakens and the light of day grows longer, I open my heart to the spirit of renewal this April. I thank you for the season of growth that is unfolding around me and within me.

Grant me the courage to let go of the old habits, fears, and "winter" thoughts that no longer serve my soul. Just as the soil prepares for new seeds, soften my heart so that your wisdom may take root.

Fill me with the power of Resurrection. In moments where I feel stuck or discouraged, remind me that you specialize in making all things new. Help me to see the "empty tombs" in my life not as signs of loss, but as evidence of your transformative power at work.

Teach me the beauty of humility. May I find joy in simple service and strength in being a source of peace for others. Let my words and actions be in harmony with your grace.

As April rains fall, let them wash away my doubts and nourish my faith, so that I may bloom in the unique way you intended.

Amen.