

PRAY EVERY DAY April 4, 2021 Resource

A Blessing from Psalm 118:19, 24 (NRSV)

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.
This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Read the Bible in 2021 Challenge (Genesis to Revelation)

April 5: 2 Samuel 1 – 3	April 9: 2 Samuel 16 – 18
April 6: 2 Samuel 4 – 7	April 10: 2 Samuel 19 – 21
April 7: 2 Samuel 8 – 12	April 11: 2 Samuel 22 – 24
April 8: 2 Samuel 13 – 15	

Small Group or personal study

Read Mark 16:1-14, 19-20

- Look carefully at the notes in your Bible about vv. 8-20 in your Bible and see how they indicate there is uncertainty about the end of the Gospel of Mark. Some of the earliest manuscripts of Mark end with v. 8, "...and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Later manuscripts add tidier endings to summarize what happened later such as "The Shorter Ending of Mark" (no verse markers) or "The Longer Ending of Mark" (vv. 9-20). Some manuscripts also add "Amen" in different places. Additional endings added later may not be a surprise since v. 8 doesn't tell the rest of the story. It leaves the reader saying, "What happened next?"

- Mark 16:8 may be a great ending for how the good news of Jesus comes to us. Read Mark 16:1-8 and then read Mark 1:1. Mark does not write the end of the good news of Jesus Christ. Mark wrote the beginning of it. The good news of Jesus goes on still. As people who have read through the Gospel of Mark and witnessed the empty tomb along with Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, the question arises: "What will we do with the good news of Jesus?" Will we believe it? Will we share it? Will we invite Jesus to live in us?

- The women in Mark 16:1-8 were told to tell other disciples that Jesus would go before them into Galilee and they would see Jesus there. Galilee for the disciples was "home." The disciples were promised they would see Jesus in Galilee – in their stomping ground where they had their homes, families, work, and even the ongoing problems and hardships of the world. The resurrected Jesus would meet them there. What is your Galilee? Where are your regular stomping grounds right now where Jesus will go before you and meet you?

- It may be the best ending for the Gospel of Mark is the taking up the story of Jesus in our own lives. Write out your own ending for the Gospel of Mark with you in it as a prayer exercise reflecting on how Jesus has come to you and how God is bringing the good news to life through you.

Spend time in silence

Prayer for others and yourself

The Lord's Prayer

A Daily Prayer for Racial Justice and Reconciliation

(The following prayer is offered by the Bishops' Work Group on Racial Justice and Reconciliation.)

O loving God,

We give you thanks for creating the world which is full of diversity
and for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth.

You reign over all the nations and are seated on your holy throne.

You rule over all the peoples without partiality in respect to nations or races
because righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.

Forgive us for the times when we put walls around us with false pride and racial prejudice.

Forgive us for the times when we were silent in the face of racism, private or institutional.

Open our eyes to see Christ who is in people of every nation and every culture.

Break down the walls that separate us. Set us free from fear, hatred and racism.

Bind us together with the unity of God's love. Restore oneness to the family of God.

We pray in the name of Jesus who came, lived and died for all humanity. Amen.

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Call to Pray at Noon Every Day

Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

We thank you for your blessings, past, present and future. You are our rock and the source of our hope in all things and at all times. As Jehovah Jireh, our provider God, we ask you this day to stretch out your mighty hand and eradicate from the face of the earth forever this virus called COVID-19 (coronavirus) that is spreading rapidly from continent to continent.

We also pray that you, Jehovah Rapha, our healing God, would place your hand upon all of those who have been stricken by this virus and restore them to full health. Be with those who have lost loved ones and are grieving. Protect all who are caring for those with this virus and keep them from contracting it themselves. Calm our fears and provide us with your peace that surpasses all understanding. Strengthen us with the joy of the Lord and help us to hold firmly to the hope that only you can provide.

Unify us that we, the Virginia Annual Conference, may be able to experience anew the promise of your presence in and through the unity of our faith, hope and trust in you in the days ahead and forever. We offer this prayer in the mighty name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
AMEN.

Share the Love of Jesus because It's All about Relationships

How will you or how did you share the love of Jesus with neighbor today with no strings attached? Write it down and share it this week in small group for support and prayer.

Joy in the Resurrection of Jesus from Psalm 118:21-23 (NRSV)

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.