

Pastoral Prayers  
For the Second Sunday of Easter  
April 19, 2020  
By Zac Koons

God of resurrection, after you raised your Son to new life, he gained a reputation for showing up in unexpected places. In this time where we are unable to seek you in the expected place of your church buildings, surprise us with your presence like you surprised your disciples, for we are hiding behind closed doors just as they were, not for fear of violence but for fear of a virus. Come and stand beside us in our homes, that our fear may shrink when set against the glory of your resurrection, in Your most holy name, Amen.

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God of creation, your Son was raised and visited the disciples on the first day of the week. We are struggling to know even what day of the week it is. Bring clarity to our confusion. Equip our leaders with right knowledge and ample courage to act. Bring imagination and energy to scientists who search for cures. Fill the hearts of all those with influence with the fruits of your Spirit, that we may share your peace in every home, every city, and every nation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

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Leading God, behind closed doors in Jerusalem your disciples were a long way from home, breathe your Spirit on those who must now be isolated from family and loved ones—the sick in the hospital and those unable to visit them, grandparents separated from new grandchildren, infected healthcare workers isolated from spouses and children, boyfriends and girlfriends whose relationships face an unexpected test, friends from friends who get them better than their own family, and parents who daily struggle to resist the temptation to come kidnap their adult children—that your Spirit may keep us company as we eagerly await reunion and embrace, in your Son's name, Amen.

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Gathering God, we wonder how the disciples got along with one another behind those closed doors in your absence. Give us patience toward those with whom we share our quarantine—marriages confronted by long-ignored questions, sibling rivalries bubbling beyond their normal boiling point; toward those like Thomas who don't believe anything you say and constantly question the authority of your sources, and those who struggle to have faith when your absence seems more tangible than your presence; and toward those like the disciples, whose faith could appear naïve and annoying; who talked about God so much they risked ignoring the reality that awaited them on the other side of the doors. Give protection to those whose homes are not sanctuaries of safety but contexts for violence and manipulation. Make yourself known to us in our wounds, that we may proclaim with Thomas "My Lord and my God" and experience new life in Jesus' name. Amen.

We commend to your care those who have died, \_\_\_\_\_, and ask that you receive them into the arms of your mercy. We rejoice in the example of the saints who have gone before us into glory, that having believed, they now also see. Amen.