



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Easter 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Happy Easter to you and your families!

This Easter Sunday, Easter Octave, Divine Mercy Sunday and Easter Season we continue to pray and contemplate our Lord's Resurrection appearances, and we give thanks for Pope Leo XIV and his worldwide spirit of Catholic mission.

In his Cycle of Catechesis on the Resurrection of Christ, Pope Leo writes: "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is an event that one never finishes contemplating and meditating on, and the more one explores it, the more one is filled with wonder, drawn in as if by an overwhelming yet fascinating light. It was an explosion of life and joy that changed the meaning of reality itself, from negative to positive; yet it did not happen in a striking way, much less a violent one, but gently, hidden, one might say humbly." (October 22, 2025 Audience)

Pope Leo recognizes that there is much sadness in the world – "a feeling of precariousness, at times profound desperation." We think especially of the daily crosses and trials of those from war-torn and violence-ridden areas of the world.

The Holy Father then reflects on the despair of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus. Their hearts burn and their joy is restored as the Risen Lord explains the Scriptures to them and they recognize Him in the breaking of the bread. In this way, the Paschal Mystery gives us hope and strength in every trial and circumstance.

Pope Leo concludes: "May the unexpected joy of the disciples of Emmaus be a gentle reminder to us when the going gets tough. It is the Risen One who radically changes our perspective, instilling the hope that fills the void of sadness. On the paths of the heart, the Risen One walks with us and for us. He bears witness to the defeat of death and affirms the victory of life, despite the darkness of Calvary... He alone makes the impossible possible!"

May the Light of the Risen Christ illumine our path to holiness on earth and our path to eternal life and happiness with God in Heaven.

Sincerely yours in the Risen Lord,

Most Reverend John O. Barres  
Bishop of Rockville Centre