

Easter 3A - 2026

Where is God?

A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. They were always getting into trouble and their parents knew that if any mischief occurred in their neighborhood, their sons were probably involved. The boys' mother heard that a priest in the downtown parish had been successful in disciplining children, so she asked if he would speak with her boys. The pastor agreed but asked to see them individually. So, the mother sent her 8-year-old first, in the morning, and fixed the appointment of the older boy with the priest in the afternoon. The priest, a huge man with a booming voice, sat the younger boy down and asked him sternly, "*Where is God?*" a basic Baltimore Catechism question. The boy's mouth dropped open and he made no response. So, the priest repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "*Where is God!!?*" Again, the boy made no attempt to answer. So, the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face and bellowed, "WHERE IS GOD!?" The boy screamed, ran directly home, and dove into his closet, slamming the door behind him. When his older brother found him in the closet, he asked, "*What happened?*" The younger brother, gasping for breath, replied, "*We are in BIG trouble this time, Dave. God is missing - and they think WE did it!*"

Slow to Recognize Greatness

Karl Barth, one of the twentieth century's most famous theologians, was on a streetcar one day in Basel, Switzerland, where he lived and lectured. A tourist to the city climbed on the streetcar and sat down next to Barth. The two men started chatting with each other. "Are you new to the city?" Barth inquired. "Yes," said the tourist. "Is there anything you would particularly like to see in this city?" asked Barth. "Yes," he said, "I'd love to meet the famous theologian Karl Barth. Do you know him?" Barth replied, "Well as a matter of fact, I do. I give him a shave every morning." The tourist got off the streetcar quite delighted. He went back to his hotel saying to himself, "I met Karl Barth's barber today." That amuses me. That tourist was in the presence of the very person he most wanted to meet, but even with the most obvious clue, he never realized that the man with whom he was talking was the great man himself.

It reminds me of Mary's reaction on Easter morning. In her grief, she thinks the man she is speaking to is the gardener. It is not, of course. Until he called her name she did not realize that she was speaking with the risen Christ.

And, of course, it reminds me of that scene on the road to Emmaus, when later that same Easter day, two of the disciples walk for a while with the resurrected Jesus, and they, too, had no idea with whom they were conversing.

(by King Duncan from *Collected Sermons*, www.Sermons.com)

The risen Lord with the most beautiful smile.

A young boy was walking home through the park after attending a Sunday school class. Somehow, he couldn't stop thinking about the lesson for that day about Jesus' teaching on the Last Judgment. What impressed him most was what the teacher said, *"When you give something to another person, you're really giving it to Jesus, and you will find the risen Jesus in everyone you meet."* As he continued through the park, he noticed an old woman sitting on a bench. She looked lonely and hungry. So he sat down next to her, took a chocolate bar he had saved and offered some to her. She accepted it with a beautiful smile, and he watched her smiles as she chewed the chocolate. Then they sat together in silence, just smiling at each other. Finally, the boy got up to leave. As he began to walk away, he turned, ran back to the bench, and gave the woman a big hug. When he arrived home, his mother saw a big smile on his face and asked, *"What made you so happy today?"* He said, *"I shared my chocolate bar with Jesus."* Before his mother could ask more questions, he added, *"You know, she has the most beautiful smile in the world!"* Meanwhile, the old woman returned to her little apartment where she lived with her sister. *"You're all smiles,"* said her sister. *"What made you so happy today?"* She replied, *"I was sitting in the park, eating a chocolate bar with Jesus. And, you know, he looks a lot younger than I expected!"* — Today's Gospel tells us that we will meet and experience the risen Jesus in unexpected places and persons. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

What exciting thing is going to happen today?"

In A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*, Pooh and Piglet take an evening walk. For a long time, they walk in silence, the silence only best friends can share. Finally, Piglet breaks the silence and asks, *"When you wake up in the morning, Pooh, what's the first thing you say to yourself?"* *"What's for breakfast?"* answers Pooh, and then asks, *"And what do you say, Piglet?"* Piglet says, *"I say, 'I wonder what exciting thing is going to happen today!'"* [Robert D. Dale, *To Dream Again*, (Broadman Press, Nashville, 1981).] — You and I can't really plan to meet the risen Christ because we never really know when or where He's going to show up. But you can be sure of this: He will show up. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).