

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

LECTIONARY #42

READING I Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak and said:

"You know what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached,

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth

with the Holy Spirit and power.

He went about doing good

and healing all those oppressed by the devil,

for God was with him.

We are witnesses of all that he did

both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.

This man God raised on the third day and granted that he

be visible,

not to all the people, but to us,

the witnesses chosen by God in advance,

who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

He commissioned us to preach to the people

and testify that he is the one appointed by God

as judge of the living and the dead.

To him all the prophets bear witness,

that everyone who believes in him

will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

Paul is teaching the people by telling them the story of Jesus.
Judea = joo-DEE-uh or joo-DAY-uh

Paul testifies to the resurrected Jesus by recounting his eating, a bodily action that cannot be denied. Stress "after" to make this clear.
Jesus commissioned the apostles to preach, to share the Good News; this commission extends to all the baptized.

There are options for today's readings. Contact your parish staff to learn which readings will be used.

READING I

It is not an overstatement to say that the readings of Lent and the celebrations of Holy Week all come together in the readings of Easter Sunday. While some of these readings come from contexts that are distant from Easter's historical events, all of the readings reflect on Easter's central mystery:

Christ was raised from the dead and inaugurated a new age of grace. Today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles describes the missionary activity and message of the early church following the martyrdom of Stephen. After Jesus' death, resurrection, appearances, and the commission he gave to the disciples to preach, placing all this detail against the backdrop of salvation history that is now fulfilled in Jesus. Peter interprets Jesus' role as the divinely appointed "judge of the living and the dead," as well as the source of forgiveness of sins for all who believe. This speech is one of the best examples of the core teaching of the early

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 (24)

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

or

R. Alleluia.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

for his mercy endures forever.

Let the house of Israel say,

"His mercy endures forever."

"The right hand of the LORD has struck

with power;

the right hand of the LORD is exalted.

I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD.
The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.

READING II Colossians 3:1-4

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians

Brothers and sisters:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above,

where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ your life appears,

then you too will appear with him in glory.

Or:

For meditation and context:

Corinthians = kohr-in-three-uhnz

Notice the repeated words in this short

reading. Don't overemphasize them; allow

the message to come through: seek the

things of heaven, our eternal home in Christ.

Make eye contact with the assembly and

deliver the last line. This is part of our

Easter joy!

Church. The scene is immediately followed by the fourth outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles, with the hearers' response of faith to the message being affirmed by the reception of baptism. This scene also demonstrates the first step in the controversial mission to the Gentiles that is taken up in Acts.

READING II

Colossians. Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday's emphasis on baptism makes Paul's letter (written from his imprisonment) to the Colossians an especially relevant reading.

Coming from the very end of Paul's life, or perhaps shortly after his death, Colossians offers a penetrating reflection on the power of baptism as the answer to the community's confusion about external religious influences, such as ascetic practices, repeated rituals, and elements from Jewish folk tradition. Since the community tends to view the world as profoundly evil, Paul assures them that the power of the risen Christ is stronger than the world. Then, in today's reading, Paul pulls the community itself into this powerful mystery. With echoes of Psalm 110:1, Paul declares that Christ is *now* seated at God's right hand. But there is more! By virtue of their baptism, the Colossians are *now* raised with Christ, their lives are "hidden with Christ in God," and they are destined to "appear with him in glory." Consequently, through the one act of baptism, they are freed from ascetic practices and repeated rituals. Indeed, as Paul declares, they should "think of what is above, not of what is on earth." **1 Corinthians.** For Paul, baptism effects a total transformation. While his most powerful image of that transformation is of dying and rising (for example,

READING II 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened.

Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed.

Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Corinthians = kohr-IN-three-uhnz

Paul is calling us to a new ethical standard. Emphasize "little" and "all."

Paul gets practical. Name the concrete sins of our life slowly ("malice and wickedness"), as well as the virtues we should replace them with ("sincerity and truth").

For meditation and context:

TO KEEP IN MIND Sequences originated as extensions of the sung Alleluia before the proclamation of the Gospel, although they precede the Alleluia now. The Easter Sequence is an ancient liturgical hymn that praises Christ, the paschal victim, for his victory over death. Mary Magdalene recounts her experience at Christ's tomb, proclaiming, "Christ my hope is arisen."

SEQUENCE Victimae paschali laudes

Christians, to the Paschal Victim Offer your thankful praises!

Lamb the sheep redeemers!

Christ, who only is sinless,

Reconciles sinners to the Father.

Death and life have contended in that combat stupendous:

The Prince of life, who died,

reigns immortal.

Speak, Mary, declaring

What you saw, wayfaring.

"The tomb of Christ, who is living,

The glory of Jesus' resurrection;

Bright angels atesting,

The shroud and napkin resting.

Yes, Christ my hope is arisen;

to Galilee he goes before you."

Christ indeed from death is risen, our new

life obtaining.

Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning!

Amen. Alleluia.

Hebrews from the angel of death, Paul reminds the Corinthians that their "paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed." Thus, reminded of their paschal lamb and their vocation as God's holy people and as unleavened bread, the community is to celebrate and act "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The practical consequence is to remove the offending person from their midst as one clears out old leaven. While the events of this reading are removed in time from the events of Easter, it still offers a powerful reflection on the

presence of a member engaging in incest, but they are concealed and boastful about it. In order to emphasize the seriousness of this situation, Paul appeals to their identity as God's holy people. He argues his case by pointing to the Passover meal and the way that it was made holy for Christians at the Last Supper. Just as Jews would cleanse their houses of the old leaven before the yearly celebration of Passover, the Corinthians were to "clear out" the old yeast of sin in order to be made into a new and unleavened batch. Alluding to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb that saved the

Romans 6:1-11), he uses the image of a fresh batch of dough in today's reading. Addressed to a community in Corinth that he founded, and with which he lived for eighteen months, Paul tackles many difficult ethical issues in this talented but head-strong community. While Paul complained much about their rivalries and divisions, he was especially appalled by their boasting and conceit. Today's reading is part of a larger argument against divisions, boasting, and conceit. In this reading, he accuses the community of tolerating a case of incest in their midst. Not only do they tolerate the

AFTERNOON GOSPEL Luke 24:13-35

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred.

And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?"

They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?"

And he replied to them, "What sort of things?"

They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him.

But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place.

Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body;

they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. »

Emphasize "first," a theological statement that represents a new beginning, a new creation.
Emmaus = eh-MAY-uhhs

The question was so shocking, it needs their full attention. They stop in their tracks. What tone would you use to answer him? incredulity? Sadness? Cleopas = KLEE-oh-puhs

At Jesus' continued questioning, they respond, "They" indicates both are responding. Alternate the tone from the one who states the facts to the one who interprets the facts.
Nazarene = NAZ-uh-reen

Their hopes were dashed. Read this with regret.

They hear valuable testimony and then have additional witnesses of the empty tomb, yet they still do not believe.

AFTERNOON GOSPEL

The Lukan Gospel assigned

to celebrations of Mass in the afternoon on Easter day, Jesus' appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, has powerful resonances with other appearances of the risen Lord (especially to Mary Magdalene in John 20). These stories demonstrate that recognizing the resurrected Lord was neither simple nor immediate even for those who knew him well. Not only does this say

there is so much to absorb that this revelation will take time to accept.

something about resurrection, it also offers insight into the process necessary to accept the very idea of resurrection. As such, it models the process of moving from dejection and incomprehension to faith.

What is particularly striking in this story is the way the two disciples tell and interpret what they are telling. Moving away from Jerusalem and fully immersed in their sadness, the two disciples are joined by an unknown stranger to whom they accurately describe the key elements of the Jesus story that will later form the heart of their preaching. But at this point

Still blinded to the identity of their unknown companion, they listen as he tells the story again and explains that Moses and the prophets all revealed that the Christ would suffer but also enter into glory. The need for this explanation recalls

Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see.”

And he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures.

As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.”

So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.

Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?”

So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!”

Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

reflect on what was happening in their hearts as they heard Jesus' words, which in turn propels them to return to Jerusalem and share with the other disciples the news of their encounter. This Easter Gospel gives witness to the power of the Eucharistic liturgy, the Mass, as it demonstrates how the Lord is truly present in the story told and the bread broken and shared. S.L.

Jesus is frustrated yet also compassionate; he will go on to explain what they do not yet understand. Read strongly.

Change to a narrator voice.

Read the eucharistic language slowly.

The energy of the narrative intensifies.

Imagine the pace at which they walked away from Jerusalem at the beginning of the reading and the pace at which they returned here.

the Gospel from this morning, in which we heard that even as they left the empty tomb, Peter and the Beloved Disciple still did not understand the Scriptures that predicted the *necessity* of Jesus' suffering. In spite of this explanation, however, the two disciples still cannot "see" the identity of their strange travel companion.

It is only when they invite him to dine with them, and when he takes the bread, blessing it, breaking it, and giving it to them (as he had done the night of the Last Supper), that they come to sight. Jesus' sudden disappearance prompts them to