

Commentary on the Readings for April 16, 2017

Easter Sunday

The readings for today will be somewhat anti-climactic if you attended the Easter Vigil, *Mass of the Resurrection*, on Saturday. Nevertheless, the joy of this great feast is evident in all the readings. We should be overflowing with joy and enthusiasm knowing that our salvation and redemption have been accomplished through the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, all the readings assume that we know what has just happened in Jerusalem 2000 years ago. So put yourself into the picture and become one of those in the celebration.

In the **First Reading**, from the *Acts of the Apostles (10:34- 43)*, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit and a renewed sense of confidence, stands up boldly before a large crowd in Jerusalem and re-tells the story of Jesus' public life and death and what it means to all mankind. We should read this everyday of our lives and give thanks to God for His love which made it possible.

The **Responsorial Psalm (118:1-23)** is an important liturgical poem sung at the Jewish Seder or Passover Meal. It recalls how the Israelites implored the God of Israel for help during a time of suffering and how God came to their rescue. The Psalmist then goes on to offer praises of thanksgiving, acknowledging God's benevolence.

In the **Second Reading**, from St. Paul's *Letter to the Colossians (3:1- 4)*, Paul is speaking about our Baptism being a form of spiritual death and resurrection where we die to all forms of sin and arise with Christ to a new life — the Christian life. Think of this as if you have just put on a new suit or dress. You don't go out and work in the garden or clean the garage in a new suit or dress. Instead, you want to be seen in some festive way, alive and joyful. The “Christian Way of Life” is special and we should protect it from the dirt and grime of sin.

The **Gospel Reading** for Easter Sunday is from the *Gospel of John (20:1- 9)*. This, as we said before, might be anti-climactic; however, it tells us that even the Apostles had a difficult time in understanding and accepting something so great, so unique as the Resurrection of the person they called "Lord." And so it is with us today. Often we might be tempted to doubt this or some other great event in the life of Jesus Christ just as Thomas and some of the other disciples did. However, don't let doubts linger. These are opportunities to learn. Ask the Holy Spirit to make things clear and understandable. Then, when the light of understanding comes on, the Spirit of Jesus will arise in your heart just as He did for the Apostles on that first Easter Sunday.

In addition to celebrating this great **Day of the Lord** with family and friends, set aside a few minutes to spend with Jesus in prayer thanking Him for His love and the great gift of the Resurrection. Something to think about during your Prayer Time this week! **MFB**