

The Good News

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The Catechetical Newsletter of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Monday, April 2, 2007

The Readings for This Sunday

- Easter Sunday
- Sunday, April 8, 2007
- First Reading: Acts 10:34a, 37-43
- Responsorial Psalm: Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
- Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4, 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
- Gospel: John 20:1-9

Power Verse to Memorize

Memorize the following verses from this Sunday's Second Reading:

Colossians 3:1. *If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.*

The New American Bible, (Nashville, Tennessee: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) 1997.

Weekly Scripture Reflection

By Eric J. Westby

Director of Family Catechesis, Diocese of PHX

Use these reflections to help you prepare for Mass this Sunday. You can use it on your own, with your family, with a prayer partner, or in any group setting.

Summary of the Gospel:

If you have seen Mel Gibson's 'The Passion of the Christ', you can get a glimpse at the emotions the disciples must have felt after Jesus' execution. No doubt all of them were stunned by the brutality that was inflicted on their Lord. They would have been depressed that the Lord was dead and in fear for their own lives. Many of the disciples, especially St. Peter, would have been experiencing the shame of abandoning Jesus. One of them, Judas, let that shame go all the way to despair, and so he chose to end his life in suicide. The Blessed Virgin Mary, even though her faith never wavered, was experiencing the anguish of the loss of her child. So the stage is set for the Third Day. In the most important event that ever happened in history, Jesus showed His power over death by conquering it through His resurrection. By this feat, Jesus guaranteed every word He ever said, every claim He ever made about Himself, and every promise He ever made to us. What person every said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life' and backed it up by rising (on his/her own power) from the dead? Only one person ever did – Jesus Christ. When Peter and 'the other disciple' (the speedier St. John) arrive at

the tomb, they see it empty, with the burial cloths off to the side. This is their first glimpse of evidence of Jesus' resurrection. We know, through the testimony of the Apostles, the martyrs who died for Jesus, and through the ministry of the Church, that Jesus is alive today. He defeated death and is in full control of everything. This raises an important question for each one of us: Why do we have so little faith in Jesus? If Jesus can conquer death, why do we struggle to trust Him with the smaller issues of our daily lives? Above all else, the celebration of Easter should call us to live lives of deep trust in Jesus. There is not a situation He can't take care of, there is not a problem in our lives that He can't overcome. The challenge for us this Easter is to allow the reality of the Resurrection to transform us into people of confidence in God. Why do most Catholics live their lives as if Jesus is still in the tomb, afraid to give Jesus full control of their lives? The Apostles were so transformed by this experience that most of them (except St. John) willingly allowed themselves to be killed for their testimony to the risen Christ. You and I are called to that very same witness. May we have the courage, no matter where we find ourselves, to give testimony to the resurrected Christ, to give up our attractions to this world, and to live lives in full confidence of God's power.

Discussion Questions based on this Sunday's Gospel:

1. Describe, as best you can, the emotions that went through Sts. Mary of Magdala, Simon Peter and "the other disciple" as they witnessed and explored the empty tomb.
2. List the physical evidence in this passage for the Resurrection. Why do you think St. John included this evidence? What arguments was he trying to defend?
3. Why is the Resurrection so important to Christianity? How does it give Christianity credibility? Why is it important to understand the Resurrection as a physical resuscitation of Jesus' dead body, and not either a hallucination, a hoax or the revival of an almost-dead body?
4. Access the Sunday Readings at: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/040807.shtml>.

