

50 DAYS OF EASTER

The fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better as one “great Sunday.” These above all others are the days for the singing of the Alleluia. The Sundays of this season rank as the paschal Sundays and, after Easter Sunday itself, are called the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Sundays of Easter. The period of fifty days ends on Pentecost Sunday. The first eight days of the Easter season make up the octave of Easter and are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord.

General Norms for the Liturgical Year

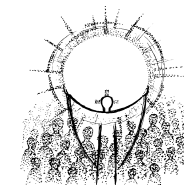
Unlike Advent and Lent, the Easter Season is not a preparation for a solemnity but a prolongation of that just celebrated.

ENJOY!



Preparing to hear God's word...

Next Sunday's Reading:
2nd Sunday of Easter Yr. C
28th April 2019



The portion of John's Gospel which is read today is absolutely indispensable. It tells of two appearances of Jesus, the first taking place in the evening of Easter Sunday and the second a week later. The two accounts are really one, for the first appearance took place when Thomas was absent, the second when he was present. But this is not an insignificant detail. Thomas' twofold reaction, first disbelief in his companions' testimony: “*We have seen the Lord!*,” then a personal avowal of faith: “*My Lord and my God!*,” connect these two stories of the only “official,” so to speak, appearances of the risen Christ to the apostles. They end with a saying of the Lord that holds true for all believers: “*Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.*” And finally, this passage is the conclusion of the Fourth Gospel, written so that we might believe and, through faith, that we might have eternal life.

Days of the Lord - Easter

We should take heart from today's gospel. We see, how like us, the disciples are initially filled with hesitation and doubt, until they go beyond immediate experience, moving from ‘seeing’ to ‘believing’. We are being called to follow their example of faith.

First Reading ~ Acts 5: 12-6

The faithful all used to meet by common consent in the Portico of Solomon. No one else ever dared to join them, but the people were loud in their praise and the numbers of men and women who came to believe in the Lord increased steadily. So many signs and wonders were worked among the people at the hand of the apostles that the sick were even taken out into the streets and laid on beds and sleeping-mats in the hope that at least the shadow of Peter might fall across some of them as he went past. People even came crowding in from the towns round about Jerusalem, bringing with them their sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and all of them were cured.

Throughout Eastertide we will listen to the Acts of the Apostles, Luke's account of the growth of the early Church. The miracle in today's reading teaches us that the life of the Church is the continuance of the life of Christ whose Body the Church is. The miracle worked by Peter and the other disciples, mirror the miracles worked by Jesus during his ministry. The Church today, has to continue Christ's work in the world, bringing his message and healing to all.

Second Reading ~ Apocalypse 1: 9-13, 17-19

The Second Reading throughout Easter comes from the Book of the Apocalypse (Revelation) attributed to John the apostle. It was composed around AD 95 when the young Church was living under persecution. John writes to encourage the faithful to remain firm, confident that the Lord will return to reward the faithful and to judge the wicked. Today we hear of John's vision of the risen Lord, whilst he was living in exile on the Island of Patmos, for having preached God's word.

***Lord, help me to live and share
my Easter faith this day.***

John 20: 19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained' Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'we have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and My God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

“Christ has taught us that we not only receive and experience the mercy of God, but we are also called to practice mercy to others... It is not easy to love with a deep love, which lies in the authentic gift of self. This love can only be learned by penetrating the mystery of God's love”

St John Paul II