



The Resurrection of the Lord – Easter Day † Sunday 16th April 2017

Cycle of Prayer: New Members of the Church

Keynote: Today he is risen! This day we rejoice and are glad!

Acts of the Apostles 10: 34, 37–43

'Now I, and those with me,' says Peter speaking to the people of Jerusalem, *'we can witness to everything (Jesus) did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself.'* These words are significant not only for the news which they proclaim about the death and the resurrection of Jesus, and for the personal witness that Peter and his companions are able to give; but also because they teach us that freedom and salvation are available for all who believe in Jesus. *'They killed him on a tree',* says Peter *'yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen ...now we are those witnesses – we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead ...all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'*

Responsorial Psalm 117 (118) – A processional song of praise and thanksgiving – Alleluia!

Letter of Paul to the Colossians 3: 1–4*

Paul reminds his converts at Colossae, that having been baptised and renewed in the faith of the Gospel, they must not sit back and admire the view! *'Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ,'* he writes *'you must look for the things that are in heaven ...let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on earth.'* There is a great deal to be done before the final victory when Christ comes again. The work of renewal of life goes on as we reflect on the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus that we celebrate each time we share the Eucharist.

Gospel according to John 20: 1–9*

All four Gospel narratives report the women visiting the tomb early on the first day of the week and finding it empty. The many variations of detail between the different accounts are typical of what witnesses might see and recall having been at the place at the same time. *'It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb.'* John tells us: *'She saw the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple.'* Notice John uses the word *'came running.'* Was John himself there with Simon Peter, when Mary arrived with her news? So the disciples run to the tomb themselves to inspect the situation. Dare I say it! They probably didn't trust the woman! But found when they reached the tomb that it was indeed empty *'the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over (Jesus') head ...rolled up in a place by itself.'* No simple hasty tomb robber at work here with the head cloth put aside tidily. At this point, the evangelist representing the 'faith community' gives us the real meaning of this event *'the other disciple ...also went in. He saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.'*

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*Note: Alternative Readings may be used as indicated in the Roman Lectionary