

## EASTER SUNDAY

### FIRST READING

*Acts 10:34a, 37-43*

In those days: Peter opened his mouth and said: 'You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And 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, but God raised him on the third day and caused him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM

*Ps 118(117):1-2, 16-17,  
22-23. R 24*

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

Give praise to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever. Let the house of Israel say, 'His mercy endures for ever.' **R**

The Lord's right hand is exalted. The Lord's right hand has done mighty deeds. I shall not die, I shall live and recount the deeds of the Lord. **R**

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the Lord has this been done, a marvel in our eyes. **R**

### SECOND READING

*1 Corinthians 5:6b-8*

Brothers and Sisters: Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed; let us therefore celebrate the festival in the Lord. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

### GOSPEL

*Matthew 28:1-10*

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going towards the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on the head of Jesus, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## REFLECTION

Today's glorious solemnity is the ultimate cause of all joy, fulfillment, happiness, and glory. If Jesus only died on the Cross, destroying death, something would be missing—the restoration of life into a transformed and glorified living. Easter is not only about the forgiveness of sins, it's about the temporal and eternal glorification of every human soul who dies and rises with Christ. When we focus upon the Gospel and consider the many lessons Jesus taught and the example He set, the Cross is often considered the difficult message and Easter the easy message. But is it?

The message of the Cross, as presented to us through both Jesus' teachings and His lived example, is certainly challenging. Each one of us is called to the same depth of selfless surrender of our lives to the Father's will. We must each die completely to ourselves, be purified from every sin and every attachment to sin, from every bad habit and every worldly thought, and from everything that is not God

and God alone. When our calling to die with Christ and to embrace His Cross is clearly understood, as it has been by the saints, it is likely that Christians become overwhelmed at the seemingly daunting and impossible task of dying in and with Christ.

When it comes to the Resurrection, one might be tempted to say that it is easy to accept the message it presents. New life in Christ, the fullness of joy, complete transformation, and eternal beatitude in Heaven—these initially appear easy to embrace. However, the challenge that the profound reality of Easter presents to us is that we can be certain that our current understanding of what it means to share in the Resurrection of Christ is but the faintest shadow of the reality. In truth, very few people in this life have come close to understanding the glory to which we are called on account of the Resurrection. Saints Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Sienna, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, to name a few, are among those who penetrated the mystery of Easter while still here on

earth. They achieved this spiritual knowledge only by fully dying with Christ through a life of profound prayer, penance, and charity that completely united their souls to the Most Holy Trinity.

As we celebrate Easter, it is important to know that we do not yet know all that is promised to us by the Resurrection of Christ. If we can at least know that, then our spiritual appetites will make us hungry to know. Too often, Christians go through life satisfied with the most basic understanding of the Gospel. We know that God became man, lived His life, gathered followers, taught and performed miracles, died on the Cross, rose again, ascended into Heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we have hope in His promise that if we remain in His grace, then we will share in Heaven after we die. But this is an exceptionally incomplete view of the full reality that has been comprehended in this life by the saints. It is their understanding we must seek with every power of our souls.