

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES**  
**Sunday 1 April 2018**  
**Easter Sunday - The Resurrection of the Lord!**

For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Hours are set out for every day of the Easter Octave. The Easter Octave begins with Easter Sunday and concludes on the Second Sunday of Easter. For those who attend the Easter Vigil, this Vigil takes the place of the Office of Readings.

Before beginning prayer with the Sacred Texts, let us take a look at the week ahead in Liturgy, the Australian Church and the Social Justice Calendar.

**In the Liturgy:**

Nothing takes the place of the Easter Octave.

**In the Australian Church:**

April 3: Anniversary of the death of Bishop Mulkearns, 2016.

April 7: Anniversary of the death of Archbishop Little 2008

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

April 2: World Autism Awareness Day

April 7: International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda.

**LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS**

**The readings for the Easter Sunday Eucharist are:**

Acts 10:34, 37-43

Colossians 3:1-4

John 20:1-9.

***Lectio:* Read the first text from the Acts of the Apostles, ch. 10, v's 34, and 37-43.**

Read slowly and prayerfully, really listening to the text as you read aloud. This is about my on-going conversion.

***Meditatio:* Understanding the text so that we can immerse ourselves in it, and make our response to it.**

“All who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.

Luke is the author of the Acts of the Apostles.

The apostles were witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

It is through them that all this has been passed on to us for over 2000 years. The miracle is, that when we hear of this witness in our present age, it is as fresh and as new as it was when first spoken of by Luke, in the text with which we are praying.

Peter is addressing Cornelius and his household.

Take time to ponder on this text in the days ahead as you go about your work, rest, recreation. Allow the Holy Spirit to work on the fibres of your heart, and bring forth the melody of your response to this text. I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 1.

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 117**

**The response is: THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE,  
LET US REJOICE AND BE GLAD.**

Psalm 117 is, in its original Old Testament setting, a processional Song of Praise. It contains the Christological statement: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone” – for us! We are the people of the New Covenant, and Jesus is the cornerstone of that New Covenant, and the cornerstone of the Temple within us – the place where God dwells.

***Lectio:* Read the second text from Colossians 3:1-4.**

***Meditatio:***

This part of Lectio Divina, is about explaining the text and reflecting as we hear the explanation (as did the monks of the early centuries). We are reading this explanation either on the computer, or in the leaflet we receive weekly. Be aware, that we can easily read too quickly, or be distracted.

This text exhorts us to “let our thoughts be on heavenly things”, because we have been brought back to “true life with Christ.”

But, we don’t as yet, have the fullness of glory: “When Christ is revealed, you too will be revealed, in all your glory with him.”

This text is the beginning of a new section of the letter. “These verses sum up the preceding section as a foundation for the detailed ethical instruction that follows.”

Verse 1: “At the right hand of God”, is a creedal statement based on Psalm 110:4. It was used in the early Church to show that the messianic promises had been fulfilled in Christ.”

Verses 3-4: “Although the resurrection has taken place, all the conditions of the end time are not present.” There is still a gap between what is on earth and what is in heaven, and the fulfillment of the body of Christ is ‘hidden with Christ in God; but finally, Christ and all believers will appear in glory.” (Cf. New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 54:22).

Read the text again and allow the Holy Spirit to work on your heart. What words, what phrases, what sentences are to change your life? I share my response in *Evangelizatio 2*.

**The Gospel Verse is from 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.**

**CHRIST HAS BECOME OUR PASCHAL SACRIFICE,  
LET US FEAST WITH JOY IN THE LORD.**

The Eucharistic banquet is partaken of as a “feast with joy in the Lord.”

***Lectio:* Read the Gospel text from John 20:1-9.**

Read it slowly and reflectively, and maybe a second time. Try to read aloud rather than with the mind. Listen to the text as you read.

**Meditatio:** What is it about? This text is dominated by people and grave cloths. The characters are Mary of Magdala, the first to witness that the body of Jesus is not in the grave where He was laid. She is not the first to witness to the resurrection (in this text), but to the fact that the body of Jesus is not where it should be.

Peter and John are the other characters, who, when told by Mary: “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb”, come running to the tomb to see for themselves. Only then are we confronted with grave cloths used for burial. These cloths are the real proof that Jesus is risen from the dead.

Overall, the episode prompts their memory and understanding of the teaching of scripture that “he must rise from the dead.”

Nevertheless, it must have left them in shock.

Read this Gospel text a number of times, and as you read, listen to the Holy Spirit playing like a harpist on the fibres of your heart, to bring forth the melody of your response. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 3.

**EVANGELIZATIO: My lived response to the texts with which the Church exhorts me to pray. St. James says “Be doers of the Word.” And the Book of Deuteronomy tells us that the Word of God is in our hands to do it. The Word of God is life-changing for me, when I respond to it in a practical way.**

1. My response is to the fact that Peter is addressing Cornelius and his household. I see myself as Cornelius, and my own household as the different tasks I perform daily – my work, my relationships, communal prayer (the Liturgy of the Hours), and *Lectio Divina*. All this needs to be constantly refreshed and renewed. This is done by drinking from the divine well which never runs dry – from Jesus my Lord. How? In stillness, in silence, in peace. A friend of mine leaves for work early and drives to a near-by Nature Reserve, sits quietly in his car, with the Scriptures and with an open heart to the power of God’s Word. My father, when working for years in the Brisbane CBD, went every day (in his lunch break) to St. Stephen’s Cathedral for quiet prayer and sometimes for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He was a good person because of his relationship with God. In the early 1960s, when one of his employees was diagnosed with cancer, he kept up the man’s wages, so that the man’s wife would have financial help while she nursed her dying husband. None of this will happen unless we drink deeply from the Divine Springs.
2. My response is to the truth that I have been brought to true life by Jesus, through his passion, death and resurrection. And because of this, I need to focus more and more on the things of God. It is so easy to turn my eyes in the direction of consumerism, and other false gods. It is so easy to fall into negative thinking and negative words about others whom I judge to be not up to the mark – the mark I have set for them. Just for this week, and one day at a time, I will focus on the goodness of others, encourage others, and thank those who are good to me.
3. My response is to grave cloths, or burial wrappings. We all wear them because we all protect ourselves in graves of security, isolation, independence. We can’t just throw them off. Only the love of God, present in another person

or persons enables us to throw off our grave cloths. A spouse, a friend, a community, a support group enables us to throw off our grave cloths, and emerge into the light – the Divine Light. “God is love”, says St. John – only love can set us free. A beginning step is to name the grave cloths which are keeping us cozy, and safe from the challenges to growth. This week is a chance to look at our grave cloths. One of mine is fear, and shock, at the state of the Catholic Church, and the violence in so many parts of the world. One of our elderly nuns and I made an agreement some years ago, to support each other in our fear. We used two lines from the Servant Song: “I will hold the Christ-Light for you, in the night time of your fear. I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.” Perhaps some of us can take on this responsibility for another or others this week.

*Lectio Divina is prayer with the Sacred Scriptures.  
We read, we seek to understand with the help of a commentary,  
we ponder, we take time for stillness and we respond.  
It is a way of life, not a method of prayer.  
Take the Mother of God as your model,  
the one who pondered the word of God in her heart  
and brought forth the Word made flesh, our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

*Wishing all our Oblates and friends blessings of joy, new life and  
hope on this Easter Sunday and throughout Eastertide!*

