

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES**  
**Sunday 31 March 2024**  
**Easter Sunday, Year B**  
**For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, follow your Office Book for**  
**Easter Sunday and the Octave of Easter.**

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

**In the Liturgy:**

The Easter Octave takes precedence over any other feast.

**In the Australian and New Zealand Church:**

03: Ballarat: Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. Ronald Mulkearns, 2016

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

06: International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

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

**The readings 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, chapter 10:34, 37-43. As always, it is best to read the Word of God slowly. Be aware of the Holy Spirit placing unction on the message of this text. When your heart responds to a word or a line, or a phrase, this is the Holy Spirit touching your heart and calling forth your response.

**Meditatio:** A little background to the text will help us understand it and make a response.

Luke the Evangelist is the author of this history: the record of the founding and growth of the early Church. The Acts of the Apostles is the history book of the New Testament. Chapter 10 is situated in the second section, chapters 8-12, and relates how the gospel was preached in Judea and Samaria. Chapter 10, verses 34-43 is Peter's sermon, and it is best to read from verse 34-43 in your bible. 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. Verses 35 and 36 have been omitted from the text in the Lectionary.

Make your response in the days ahead. I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 1.

*Remember also: Lectio Divina* is a way of life – allow God's word to travel with you.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

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

Psalm 117 is a processional song of praise, and verse 22 is the most important verse: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone'. Christ rejected by his people was raised up by the Father. And so, the Church is made up of those whom God has raised from death to life in union with the Risen Christ. The Church is the Temple of God, within which each of us sings our praise of God who has so loved us. (Grail Psalter, 1973 Edition, page 205).

**Lectio:** Read the Second Mass Reading, from the Letter of St. Paul to the Colossians, chapter 3, verse 1-4.

**Meditatio:** A brief explanation to help us understand this text.

These verses sum up the teaching of the preceding section as a foundation for the detailed ethical instruction that follows. Verse 1 is a creedal statement that was used in the early Church. It is based on Ps. 110:1 It was used to show that the messianic promise had been fulfilled in Christ.

Verses 3-4: Although the resurrection has already 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 fulfilment of the body of Christ is hidden "with Christ in God"; but finally, Christ and the believers will appear in glory." (New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 54:22).

Make your response to this text during the coming week. I share mine in *Evangelizatio 2*.

**Gospel Verse:** 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

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

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

From a Commentary on John's Gospel attributed to Epiphanius:

"Today God has fulfilled all types, symbols, and prophecies. Christ our Passover, the true Passover, is sacrificed, and in Christ all is made new: there is a new creation, a new faith, new laws, a new people of God, a new Israel in place of the old, a new Passover, a new spiritual circumcision, a new and unbloody sacrifice, a new divine covenant. We too must be renewed today; we must renew a right spirit within our hearts and so prepare to enter into the mysteries of this new and perfect feast and to exult in this day's heavenly joy.

Let us begin our meditation upon Christ, our Passover, and upon his mission:

Moses delivered his people from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but Christ has delivered us from the devil and evil spirits. Moses made peace between his two contending brethren, but Christ has made peace between his two peoples and united heaven and earth. Israel kept the symbolic Passover by night: we celebrate the true Passover by the light of day. Once the door posts and lintels were sprinkled with blood: now it is the hearts of the faithful that are sealed with the blood of Christ.

We turn to the rock of faith. (Moses had recourse to a rock of this creation).

The laws of God stand forever. (the tablets of the law were broken in pieces as a sign that the law would be abrogated).

The sacrifice of the Lamb of God is the salvation of the people. (the molten calf brought retribution).

Water and blood flow from the rock which is Christ (water from the rock).

Our gift from on high is the Dove, the Holy Spirit. (quails were given to the Jews of old). The bread we eat brings us everlasting life (manna)."

Epiphanius, (315-403) was a native of Palestine and founded a monastery in Judea in 335. In 367 he became bishop of Salamis. Throughout his life he was an ardent upholder of the faith of Nicaea, and intolerant of all suspicion of heresy.

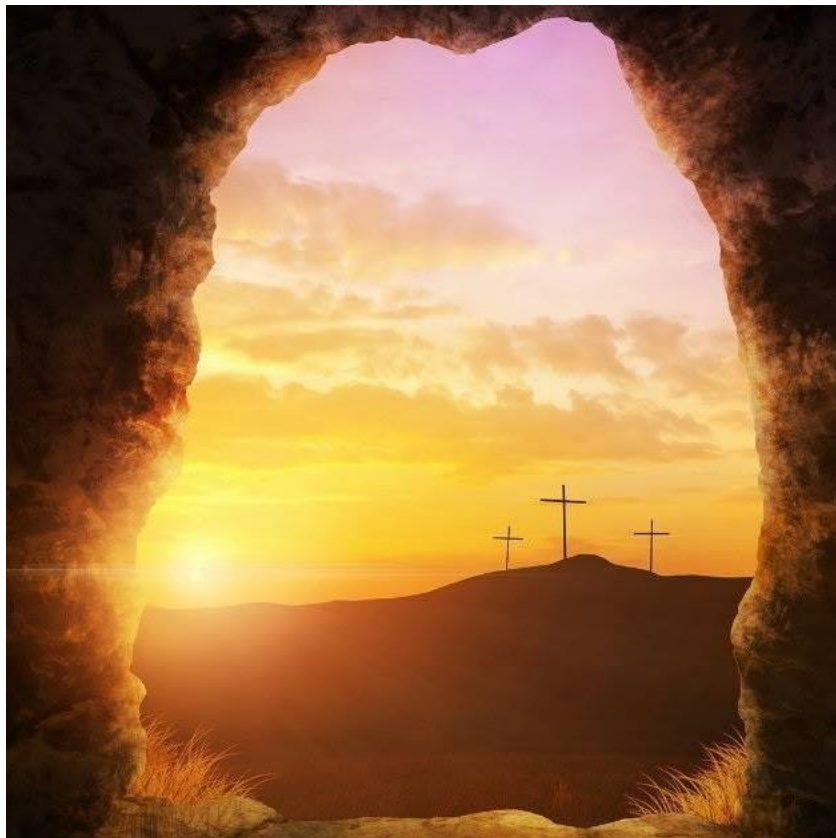
Read the Gospel again. Take quiet time. Listen to the Holy Spirit calling you forth as you make your response. I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 3.

**EVANGELIZATIO – this is one’s lived response to the texts given us by the Church each Sunday. It is about the evangelization of the “self” and pins me down to be who I am: A Christian who prays with the Word of God and responds to the call of the Word of God in my everyday life.**

1. Up until now, we have never heard Peter giving a sermon. We hear of his impetuosity, his mother-in-law, his sinking beneath the waves, his failure after a night’s fishing, his betrayal of Jesus, and his confusion when Jesus keeps asking him: “Do you love me?” My favourite story of Peter is the one at Lake Gennesaret. A storm was raging. The disciples were rowing as hard as they could, but the wind was too strong. Then behold! Jesus “started coming to them walking on the water. They thought he was a ghost! Jesus reassured them. “Don’t be afraid. It is I.” And then Peter: ‘Master if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water! And Jesus said: “Come”. Peter was great at the start – walking on the water, but after only a few steps, he lost his faith, and Jesus had to pull him up out of the water. When they were safely in the boat, Jesus said: How little faith you have. What made you doubt?’ (Failure and humiliation – in front of the others in the boat. Poor Peter). What is your favourite story of Peter? How many times has Jesus pulled you or me up and kept me from drowning? How often do I lose faith in Jesus and sink beneath the waves, or be knocked about by the storm? Hopefully in the end, I too can give a fine sermon like Peter gives in the first reading.
2. I am responding to: “will appear in glory”. Sr. Joan Chittister says “...we already have God. It is the awareness of that presence that life intends to teach us to cultivate... God is what carries us through life. God Calls me to live for more than the present, and to live despite the past, to live into the heart of the universe.” (“Our Holy Yearnings”, page 36). “The glory of God is humanity fully alive, and the destiny of humanity is the vision of God (eternal glory). The glory of God, the destiny of humanity. What more could we want?

3. Epiphanius said: “We too must be renewed today. We must renew a right spirit within our hearts and so prepare to enter into the mysteries of this new and perfect feast and to exult in this day’s heavenly joy.” So, we have work to do on Easter Sunday and throughout the Easter Octave.

*Lectio Divina is a way of life,  
- carrying the Word of God within you as you work or take leisure.  
It begins with reading the word,  
then seeking to understand what you have read,  
listening to the Holy Spirit praying within you,  
allowing God to lead you into Divine rest,  
and responding in action to what you have read and prayed over.*



***Happy Easter to all our Oblates and Friends!***