

# **Life's New Hope!**

## **I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS**

**FIRST READING** (Acts 10:34a, 37-43)

### **Act of God**

<sup>34\*</sup> Then Peter proceeded to speak and said,<sup>\*</sup>  
<sup>37</sup> what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached,<sup>38m</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth\* with the holy Spirit and power.

### **Acts of Jesus**

He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>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. <sup>40</sup>**This man God raised** (on) the third day and granted that he be visible, <sup>41n</sup> not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him **after he rose from the dead.**

### **Commissioning**

<sup>42o</sup> He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.\* <sup>43</sup> To him all the prophets bear witness, that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.

**THE FOCUS: The Resurrection of Jesus**

### **COMMENTARY**

- This is one of the preachings of Peter after the resurrection of Jesus.
- It is called *kerygma*.
- *Kerygma* in Greek is preaching.
- The content of the *kerygma* is the Christ-event (or the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus).
- It is different from a sermon or homily which explains the readings.
- V.37 talks about what has happened (events) after John preached baptism:
  - God anointed Jesus with the holy Spirit and power (v.38);



*An artist's depiction of Mary meeting the resurrected Lord*

- After his baptism, Jesus goes about doing good;
  - Healing all those oppressed (casting out demons);
  - He can do such things because “God is with him;”
  - It is consistent with his baptism.
- Witnesses
- V.39 affirms that the apostles are witnesses in Galilee (country of the Jews) and Jerusalem.
  - They witnessed his life and works (in Galilee), passion, death and resurrection (in Jerusalem) and his appearances to them.
  - The witnesses are the apostles who saw Jesus appear and who ate and drank with him even after the resurrection (v.41).
  - In v.42 He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead (v.43). To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”
  - The resurrected Christ commissioned the apostles to preach and testify.
  - To commission means to authorize, to give power:
    - to speak about his passion, death and resurrection.
    - and to testify about eminence as judge of

the living and the dead.

- The commissioning has an eschatological dimension (future).

## REFLECTIONS

The First Reading contains the *kerygma* (the Christ-event, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus).

Two important words for Christians is to preach and to testify. In a way, we are eyewitnesses with the eyes of our faith.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23)

**THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS  
MADE; LET US REJOICE AND BE  
GLAD OR ALLELUIA**

## SECOND READING (Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8 )

<sup>1\*</sup> If then you **were raised with Christ**, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. <sup>3b</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.

**THE FOCUS: You were raised in Christ**

## COMMENTARY

- The reading acknowledges that Christians (through baptism) are raised with Christ.
- Therefore, they should seek heaven where Christ seats with his Father (v.1).
- V.2 repeats the idea of verse 1, to think what is above. Their values must now be spiritual, not material or earthly.
- V.3 speaks of death (to sin) and life with Christ in God.
- V.4 speaks of Christ's second coming, when he appears again.
- Christians share in the coming of Christ in glory.

## REFLECTIONS

The resurrection changes our value sys-

tem. From now on, we must pay attention to what is spiritual, not material and worldly.

## GOSPEL READING (Jn 20:1-9)

*Mary of Magdala on a Sunday*

<sup>1\*</sup> On the first day of the week,<sup>a</sup> Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb.\* <sup>2b</sup> So she ran\* and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him."<sup>3\*</sup> So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. <sup>4</sup> They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; <sup>5</sup> he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. <sup>6c</sup> When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths\* there, <sup>7d</sup> and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. <sup>9\*</sup> For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had **to rise from the dead.**

**THE FOCUS: The Resurrection of Jesus**

## COMMENTARY

- V.1 introduces the first character: Mary of Magdala.  
Why does she go to the tomb?  
She is the first one to go to the tomb and to see the stone removed from the tomb.
- In v.2, she runs to report to Peter and to John whom Jesus loved.  
Her report: "They (whoever they are) have taken the Lord from the tomb..."  
She does not interpret the empty tomb as pointing to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Vv.3-5 Peter and John also run to the tomb.  
John runs faster than Peter, sees burial cloths but does not go in.
- In vv.6-7, Peter arrives, goes straight inside the tomb and sees burial cloths, and cloths

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of his head rolled up in a separate place.

Up to this moment, there is so much running and running.

Significant also is the mention of the cloths (rolled up in a separate place). There is a feminine tone in the resurrection of Jesus.

- V.8 indicates a development on the other disciple. He sees and believes.
- In v.9, the author comments that like Mary of Magdala, the two do not understand Jesus' resurrection.

### REFLECTIONS

The resurrection is discovered by a woman who happens to visit the tomb, maybe just to reminisce the friendship with Jesus.

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## II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TO DEVELOP YOUR SHARING/HOMILY

The First Reading talks about the kerygma which includes the resurrection of Christ.

The Second Reading talks about the meaning of our resurrection through baptism.

The Gospel Reading talks about the resurrection of Jesus through the empty tomb.

### How to develop your homily / sharing

What is Easter Sunday?

We celebrate the resurrection of Christ.

We should explain the mystery of the resurrection according to the readings.

The First Reading tells the resurrection of Christ who first ministered in Galilee, after his baptism, and then to Jerusalem, where he suffered, died and resurrection.

The apostle Peter summarizes the whole Jesus' event in his preaching.

In the Second Reading, the mystery of resurrection is rich in meaning. It does not refer only to the resurrection of Jesus, but also to the resurrection of Christians by virtue of

their baptism. They rise from death when they come out of the waters of baptism.

The bodies of Christians are resurrected bodies and they must act accordingly.

We must now live in the spiritual realm, not as men and women, still in this world, who live according to worldly values.

What is the meaning of the resurrection for the present reader?

Well, we have to believe that we share in the resurrection of Jesus.

Through our baptism, our bodies are risen from the dead (because of sin).

Now we are challenged to live accordingly as resurrected (and glorified) bodies.

As Christians, we should now be more spiritually inclined.

When we go back to the old worldly values, we go back to death.

We become unfaithful to the meaning and benefits of our baptism which are brought by the resurrection of Jesus himself.

The Christian must move from what he physically sees and observes to believing.

Believing is seeing and observing beyond what is physical and making appropriate conclusions regarding the resurrection of Christ.

Believing means affirming the resurrection of Christ. We do not have to go back to fact finding.

Resurrection is an article of faith.

It is the resurrection that gives meaning to the eucharist.

The celebration of the eucharist preserves the memory of the resurrection of the Lord.

In the eucharist, we participate in the rising of the Lord, not only in baptism.

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## III. OUR CONTEXT

- Feeling the Economic Crunch?
- Sports Clinic Development a Positive Sign
- Easter Sunday's Beach Celebration (HM)