

THE FIRST READING IS FROM THE ACTS OF THE  
APOSTLES

,

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*

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS

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*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.'

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

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.

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

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

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

THE SECOND READING IS FROM THE LETTER OF ST  
PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

Brothers and Sisters: If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

The word of the Lord

*THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION*

Alleluia, alleluia.

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

Alleluia.

## A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

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 REFLECTION

In the Cathedral in the French city of Vezelay in Burgundy, the top of one column has a carving of Judas' death by suicide, on the other side is a carving of a smiling Good Shepherd carrying a smiling Judas. This was Pope Francis view, of that carving reminding us that Jesus Christ gave his life for all, even the sinner who betrayed him.

Easter reminds us that God did for us what we could not ask nor expect. The Son of God died for us out of love for us and no one is beyond that love. He died that we might be with him in paradise sharing the Divine eternal life. We know what he did, we can know why, out of love, but somethings we cannot know and cannot speak of. God wanted us to know there were no impossible barriers, the stone rolled over the tomb was no barrier to the risen Christ, soon to ascend to the Father in Heaven .

For the Jews of Jesus' time only the High Priest could go through the veil to enter the Holy of Holies to be in the Divine presence in the temple. Matthew's Gospel last week told us the veil of the temple was torn open at Jesus death, Jesus had burst through the veil to enter the Divine life, leaving it accessible for all of us to enter the divine life.

Jesus story takes place over 3 gardens, the Garden of Eden which God gave to us, the Garden of Gethsemane where one of us betrayed him and the garden of the tomb where he rose and greeted Mary Magdalene, the friend who had stayed by the cross. The Garden of Paradise will be greater than any earthly garden, open to all who wish to enter, meeting my friend whose courage was such an inspiration to me after my stroke as he had overcome polio by living a full, too brief life here on earth, all in the presence of God. There we will meet again, all stain of sin away after a time of reconciliation to live in love and joy.