

Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Ps 118:1-2,16-17,22-23
Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-9
or Matthew 28:1-10

Monday April 18

Acts 2:14,22-33
Ps 16:1-2a,5,7-11
Matthew 28:8-15

Tuesday April 19

Acts 2:36-41
Ps 33:4-5,18-20,22
John 20:11-18

Wednesday April 20

Acts 3:1-10
Ps 105:1-9
Luke 24:13-35

Thursday April 21

Acts 3:11-26
Ps 8:2ab,5-9
Luke 24:35-48

Friday April 22

Acts 4:1-12
Ps 118:1-2,4,22-27a
John 21:1-14

Saturday April 23

Acts 4:13-21
Ps 118:1,14-21
Mark 16:9-15

Alleluia! Celebrate the healing and increased faith that comes from growing closer to Jesus through the faith-building exercises of Lent and the solemn meditations of Holy Week!

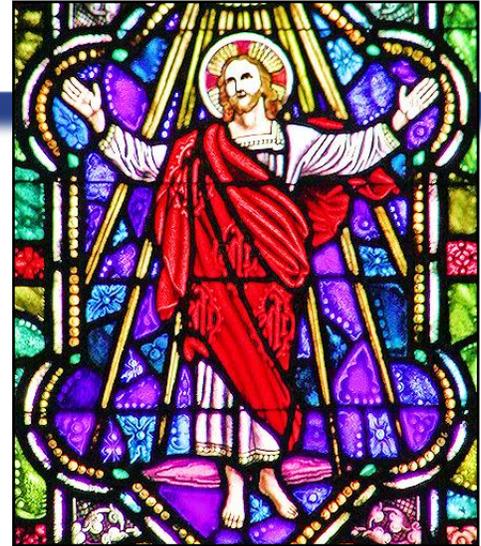
The doorway into heaven is the cross. Experiencing the glory of the celebration of Easter -- deep within our hearts, within our needs, within our desires -- began with accepting our sorrows and sacrifices and sufferings are our own personal connections to Jesus. And now, Easter joy comes not only from accepting what Jesus did for *you* on the cross but also from continuing the journey, side by side, step by step with Jesus.

When we're sincere about following Christ, if we truly want to grow in faith, we do whatever he does, united to his ministry of helping others grow in their eternal relationship with God. In this, we face the cross again and again. There is no gain in salvation

without the pain of sacrificial love.

The victorious alleluia of Easter is the triumph of the cross. It's the realization that life doesn't have to be free of troubles in order to be full of joy. It's the day-to-day living out of a faith that comes from trusting that God is carrying us through the trials and bringing good out of bad.

Our cross is a soft word that we speak when someone else is angry and we feel like shouting. Our cross is a



hand outstretched to comfort the afflicted when it's inconvenient and we feel like withdrawing. Our cross is a good deed that we do to those who treat us unjustly and we feel like retaliating. And our resurrection is the joy that comes from knowing that we have made a difference in the lives of others for the sake of God's kingdom.

Love that's given when it's difficult is a suffering love, a passionate love, a salvific love, i.e., it benefits the eternal lives of others. Then, our sacrifices have a value of endless worth. This is so much better than a self-serving, easy life. It's *eternally* better! Easter Sunday Mass is the celebration of rising with Jesus into glorious victory over evil.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What sacrifices are you suffering from right now? This is your cross. God appreciates all you have done for his kingdom; knowing this is your resurrection!
2. Describe the time when a bad experience turned into something good. What did you learn from it about God or faith?
3. How do you know that you're an Easter Christian?