

*A Missionary Commentary  
on the Sunday Readings*

## **Readings for the Mass of Easter Day**

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Colossians 3:1-4

John 20:1-9

[USCCB link to the Readings](#)

## **A New Dawn**

“Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark.”

We know Good Friday. People kill other people every day. Some do not know or care about the people they kill. Others know their victims very well, ignore their innocence, and unleash the torture of their fury. Our leaders use death and the fear of death to control us, rob us of dignity, and squash our hope.

Not anymore. Today, everything changes. We are raised into the brilliance of God’s infinite love in the dark hours of this new dawn. Mary of Magdala came because she loved Jesus. But the tomb is not a tomb. There is no death here. She runs to Peter and John. Someone has taken “the Lord.”

Peter and John ran back to the tomb. They go inside to investigate. The burial cloth is there. The head covering rolled up in a separate place. Something is just not right. Who would unwrap a body to take it away? Or remove the head covering, roll it up neatly, and put it in “a separate place?”

Easter began in darkness in an empty tomb with abandoned burial cloths. Here, John the “disciple that Jesus loved,” would see and believe.

Everything now changes. We have a choice. We can live in fear of death as our final “standard,” to use the language of St. Ignatius of Loyola, or we can live with faith in Jesus Christ, risen from the dead. Jesus gives infinite value and dignity to each human being and calls us to use that freedom, born of faith, to be a “beloved community” in mission.

We, like Peter, proclaim the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Jesus, and through him, we learn what it means to be human. We are his witnesses to his life of love and service. We have received from Jesus and the Father the same Spirit that hovered over the waters at the beginning of time, “overshadowed” Mary, the mother of

*next page*

*continued from previous page*

Jesus, drove him into the desert, and, like a rushing wind, came like tongues of fire on Pentecost.

Animated by this Holy Spirit, we participate in the mission of Jesus to bring love, salvation, and justice to the world.

Where, O death, is your sting? The tomb is empty. Jesus is risen from the dead. Alleluia!

## **Notes on the Sunday Readings**

### **First Reading**

This is Peter's proclamation of the Gospel to Cornelius, found in the Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 10), after Pentecost, his trial before the Sanhedrin, the death of Stephen, and the conversion of St. Paul. (Acts 10:34a, 37-43)

### **Psalm**

The stone rejected is now the corner stone. Death is no longer our destiny. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. (Psalm 118)

### **Second Reading**

Saint Paul reminds us that we are raised "with Christ" who is seated at "the right hand of God." He is our focus, we are to "think of what is above," not what "is on the earth." (Colossians 3:1-4)

### **Gospel**

John presents the first moments of Easter morning – Mary of Magdala coming in the dark to the tomb, a stone removed, running to "Simon Peter," two disciples running back to the tomb, finding it empty, the burial cloth, the head covering "rolled up in a separate place," and then they just "returned home." (John 20:1-9)

*Notes and Commentary by Don McCrabb, D. Min.,  
USCMA Executive Director*

To stay up to date on the latest developments,  
visit <https://uscatholicmission.org/go-forth>

Support our work – make a donation at  
<https://uscatholicmission.org/donate>

**Please pray for the missions.  
May God bless you in all the ways you Go Forth...**



**Go Forth ...** is a service funded by the Catholic Communications Campaign and USCMA, *a community of faith leaders engaged in networking, formation, and advocacy for God's mission.* All who serve God's mission are welcome. Learn more at [www.uscatholicmission.org](http://www.uscatholicmission.org) or call 202-832-3112.

