

Missionary Commentary

Easter Sunday
April 12, 2025

Sunday Readings

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](#)

Cactus Class

While on mission, I adjusted to the heat and dryness of the desert, and learned to see the real beauty of my surroundings only after spending months and months living there.

A few years after arriving, the small “Teddy Bear” cactus plant out in back of our house amazed me one day. It let one of its water-filled leaves drop onto the cement patio floor, somehow sensing exactly the best place for the detached leaf to put down its own roots—a place offering a small pile of dirt, between the wall of the house and its own pot.



Faith is a living thing, like a cactus, by which I mean that it is planted, and nourished, and grows, maturing over time until it bears fruit for harvesting, or for reproducing new plants. Jesus frequently used this metaphor. Faith allows us to bear fruit that God can then harvest.

John, running and arriving first at the empty tomb, grew in faith as a result of seeing the linen and the cloth for covering the face of Jesus’ body, understanding at that moment that Jesus kept his word, returning to the Father.

But soon, we hear the Gospel writer tell us, he will grow still further, and produce a new “limb” of faith. He will come to finally understand the Scripture that spoke of Jesus rising from the dead, and grow in his faith. He will grow along with Mary Magdalene, Peter and all the disciples, once they encounter the Risen Lord.

When we are challenged to grow in our faith, may God help us at such graced moments to embrace the opportunity to become someone new, ever clearer about what we believe, and open to live, even in extremely dry, threatening conditions, the divine gift of victory over death, and dropping off leaves of lifegiving solidarity and joy to all around us.

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Notes on the Sunday Readings

First Reading — Acts 10:34a, 37-43 — Peter's speech is a summary that Luke (the author of Acts) uses to show how the resurrected Jesus, acting as judge at the end of time, will offer forgiveness to all peoples, and not just the Jews, out of God's universal love.

Responsorial Psalm — Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 — This "royal" psalm presents an ancient aphorism about a piece of stone judged unworthy of a position of prominence in a structure by 'experts', but later becoming the most prominent element of all. This hymn would later be applied to Christ by the early Church.

Second Reading — Colossians 3:1-4 — In finding themselves in an increasingly hostile world, the early Christian community of the city of Colossae is strengthened here by inspired words that convey a strong sense of belonging to Christ, reigning in heaven, which helps them to consistently live the values of the Gospel in their ordinary, daily lives.

Easter Sequence — The Easter Sequence provides a poetic commentary on the Resurrection of Jesus, preserved from Medieval times. It is sung during the Mass for Easter Sunday and throughout the Easter Octave.

Gospel — John 20:1-9 — The emphasis in this passage from the Gospel of John is on the empty tomb, and on believing that Jesus has returned to his Father, just as he said he would (see John 16:28). Believing in Jesus' Resurrection from the dead will come later, after the Risen Lord has actually appeared to his disciples, as the author makes clear.

*Notes and commentary by Fr. Bob Mosher,
a member of the [Missionary Society of Saint Columban](#).*

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