



# THE LORD'S DAY

## 2nd Sunday of Easter (Year A)

The Watermead Apostolate offers this weekly page as a helpful guide and background to the readings used at the Catholic Mass for each Sunday of the Year.

The reading guides were written by Fr John Daley (RIP) who served as a Catholic priest in various parishes around the UK and world for 53 years.

Fr John co-founded Watermead in 1992 as a voice for people who wished to share understanding of living their faith through their God-given gifts and talents.

'The Lord's Day' incorporates some of those voices in this presentation and also through its many publications ~ books, resources, cards, music, etc.

Further information on what we produce, our story and the mission of our Christian apostolate can be found by visiting [www.watermead-apostolate.co.uk](http://www.watermead-apostolate.co.uk)

### First Reading

Acts 2 : 2-47

Peter has given a magnificent address to the crowds on the day of Pentecost (2:14-36). The reactions of the people are swift - conversion of hearts and minds and many new Christians baptised (2:37-41). Today's reading speaks of their early enthusiastic life as the community of Christ.

Proclamation becomes catechesis as the new converts seek to deepen their faith (v.42), a sense of community develops (v.42) - rather than an individual salvation - and Eucharist and prayer become the binding-forces of their common life.

An idealism seems to touch some of the new members who seek a form of apostolic life that the first disciples lived with Jesus - not having much, sharing everything. The new converts make themselves poor so that in the community they need each other. It is an imitation of Christ and the apostles.

Their faithfulness to the Temple (and synagogue) becomes an inspiration for others, their dual loyalty to Old and New Law (to Moses and to Christ) endearing them to everyone (v.47).

#### LIFE OF THE RESURRECTION

Community: giving up to give away;  
Suffering has purpose/meaning;  
Forgiveness is the first gift.

This week I shall . . .  
ponder the world's sufferings.

### Second Reading

1 Peter 1 : 3-9

Many scholars dispute the authorship of Peter's letters, and although the vigour of the writing seems to reflect the vigour of the man that we meet in the Gospel it does seem very likely that others wrote the letters, but gave them Peter's name in order to give them greater authority.

The main purpose of this first letter is to give encouragement at a time of imminent persecution. Peter opens with his greetings to fellow Christian who live in difficult circumstances, afraid of practising their faith for fear of arousing antagonism. Grace and peace he wishes them - something that was regularly a greeting from Paul to his Church communities.

Verse 7 highlights the theme of today's reading - the Christians will suffer - but all the other verses reflect joy and faith: there is resurrection after death, God's eternal promise after a small time of suffering, salvation as the reward of faith.

### Wisdom from the Saints



"Love reaches its fullness in the gift we make of ourselves, to God and our brothers and sisters."

Pope John Paul II

### Gospel Reading

John 20 : 19-31

We are in the evening of the day of Resurrection. John's Gospel has told of Mary Magdalen's morning vision of the risen Lord; we know from Luke of the afternoon meeting with the Lord by two disciples on the road to Emmaus; and now we have reached the evening.

The first gift of the Resurrection is about to be given: to forgive sins in the course of the Church's ministry, just as Jesus did in his. It is a wonderful first gift - divine forgiveness spoken in human words.

The disciples are fearful of Jesus' appearing, even though they have already heard of his resurrection. Faith does not remove fear. Jesus dispels their fear with a repeated greeting of "Peace", and he reassures them that he still wants them as his apostles. The runaway cowards who left him to his arrest, torture and death, are forgiven! It is wonderful. And their forgiveness will inspire them to offer Christ's forgiveness during their ministry.

Jesus had come in his Father's name and now he tells the apostles to go in his name, breathing on them and giving them the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins.

### People of God

**Pope John Paul II.** We remember the beatification and canonisation so few years after his death and the great sorrow shared by the Church and world as hundreds of thousands made their pilgrim way to Rome to honour his saintly life and death.

We at the Watermead Apostolate have our own precious memory of meeting him, just after our work had begun to develop. We were allowed to present to him some of our first hymns at a Papal Audience. He listened attentively as we explained what we had felt called to do, involving people in their various gifts and talents to share in the mission of the Church - publishing music, stationery, books, cards. He held our presentation folder as he listened, then smiled, gave the folder to his aide and gave us his blessing. We were part of a full parish pilgrimage and we shared and brought that blessing home. We thank him and share the Church's prayer

### Questions of Faith

**Easter and its celebration.** The word "Easter" comes from the Saxon goddess, Eastre, the goddess of the dawn. St. Bede tells us that the Anglo-Saxons called the spring month "Eosturmoneth", and thus we can understand why the name "Easter" would be given to the great Christian festival in springtime, the ancient goddess long forgotten. The European nations call the feast of Christ's resurrection by some form of name derived from "Pascha", Pasch or Passover, the central celebration of the people of Israel. The celebration of Easter goes back to the earliest Christian times, though we discover that it has been celebrated on various days according to the calendars that different peoples and cultures have followed - solar, lunar, Jewish, Babylonian, Julian, Gregorian! The date is always 14th Nisan (first month of the Jewish calendar) but the days vary. In the actual week of Jesus' death the Passover meal was celebrated on Tuesday (according to the solar calendar, as always) and on Saturday (according to the lunar calendar, where the day varied each year).