

(Easter B1) EASTER DAY

(APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2021)

**Readings:** Acts 10: 34 (35 & 36) 37 – 43; Ps. 117 (118) 1,2,16,17,22,23;  
Colossians 3:1 – 4 OR 1 Corinthians 5: 6 – 8; John 20: 1 – 9 (10 – 18).

**Today's Gospel Proclamation hardly needs a reflection – Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!**

But the alternative New Testament Reading from 1 Corinthians may benefit from a comment.

Paul uses the twin Jewish feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread as a way of speaking about the life of Christians. The Jewish Law required that no leaven (anything able to ferment) should be eaten at the Passover meal or during the seven days following. So before Passover all leaven was (and still is) removed from each house. Only then could the Passover meal, including the Paschal Lamb, be celebrated.

Paul uses a proverb, "A little yeast leavens the whole lump", to teach the Corinthians.

It seems likely that he was writing this letter to the Christians of Corinth about the time that Jews were celebrating Passover – which would have been the time when Christians were keeping the memorial of the death and resurrection of Jesus, which has developed into our Easter Triduum.

But Christians are in a different situation from Jews. For the Jews the Passover Lamb could only be killed and eaten after the leaven had been destroyed, but *Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed*, so we have the task of getting rid of *all the old leaven of evil and wickedness* so that we can properly *celebrate the feast*. The sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus is a free gift, making it possible for us to live an Easter life in *sincerity and truth*.

The translation in the Jerusalem Bible: *make yourselves into a completely new batch of bread, unleavened, as you are meant to be*, is slightly misleading: NJB is clearer: *so that you can be fresh dough, unleavened as you are*. Paul's teaching is an example of the Christian command to 'become what you are'. By his death Christ has freed us from sin and evil. Our task in these fifty days of Easter joy is to live in such a way that *evil and wickedness* have no place in our life. Our Easter communion is the sacramental sign of the Risen Christ's redeeming work in us, and also our pledge of loyalty to him.

*Thou, our Paschal Lamb indeed, Christ, today thy people feed;*

*Take our sins and guilt away, that we all may sing for ay, **Alleluia!***