

Introductions to the Readings – April 2010

Second Sunday of Easter, April 11

First Reading: Acts 5: 12-16

During the seven weeks of the Easter season, the first reading is always from the Acts of the Apostles. Its author, Luke, saw the history of salvation in three great stages: In the first stage, found in the Old Testament, God's Spirit raises up leaders and prophets to guide the people; in the second stage, found in Luke's Gospel, the Spirit anoints Jesus as God's holy one; and in the third stage, described in the book of Acts, the Spirit works in the Church, fulfilling Christ's promise to be with us until the end of time.

Second Reading: Revelation 1: 9-13, 17-19

This year during the Easter season, the second reading each Sunday is from the book of Revelation. Revelation is an Easter book because it focuses on the Risen Jesus and our final victory over sin and death. Today's passage describes the call that the author received to convey God's message of hope to Christians who were being persecuted toward the end of the first century.

Third Sunday of Easter, April 18

First Reading: Acts 5: 27-32, 40-41

The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of the early Church during the first 30 years after the resurrection of Jesus. It describes God's Spirit at work, directing, encouraging and supporting the members of the Church.

Second Reading: Revelation 5: 11-14

The book of Revelation was written around 95 A.D. for Christians living in modern-day Turkey. The Roman emperor ordered his subjects to worship him as a god. When the Christians resisted, they were persecuted. The book of Revelation was written to encourage them. Today's passage describes a vision of God's people enjoying heavenly life and singing God's praises for their victory.

Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 25

First Reading: Acts 13: 14, 43-52

None of the readings at liturgy during the seven-week Easter season are from the Old Testament. In its place, we read from the Acts of the Apostles to show how the Easter message spread far and wide to all parts of the Mediterranean world. Today, Paul and Barnabas are preaching in what is now central Turkey.

Second Reading: Revelation 7: 9, 14-17

The book of Revelation is not intended to predict actual people and events in future times. The author was concerned only about people and events in that time and was given no privileged information about the future. In today's passage, the author encourages people of that time by presenting a vision of God's people enjoying heavenly life.