

About the Readings on 4.7.24

Second Sunday of Easter

The church keeps Easter for eight Sundays. Early Christians referred to Sunday as the eighth day, as if the normal week of seven is miraculously completed in an extraordinary eighth day. The fifty days culminates at Pentecost. Each Sunday, individually and communally, we meet the risen Christ in word and sacrament.

Acts 4:32-35

Throughout the Sundays of the fifty days of Easter, passages from Acts proclaim the meaning of the resurrection. In today's idyllic description of the primitive community, we see that the resurrection of Christ changes the values of believers, and their sense of self embraces the whole community.

Psalm 133

We respond to Luke's account of radical Christianity by singing **Psalm 133**, a celebration of the community of believers. The image of oil recalls the Israelite anointing of Aaron to serve as priest and to approach God in prayer, and the image of dew comes from Palestine, where with minimal rainfall, the day's dew is a significant source of moisture for the life of all.

1 John 1:1—2:2

Throughout the weeks of Easter, year B reads through 1 John. Chapter 1 proclaims the resurrection with language of eternal life, the light of God, and forgiveness. Christ is not dead but appeals for us before the Father.

John 20:19-31

The church continues the pattern alluded to in John's gospel, of assembling on the first day of the week to receive the Spirit of the cross and resurrection and to exchange the peace of Christ. As we expect of John, the narrative in chapter 20 testifies to the identity of Christ as Lord and God. For Christians, to touch Christ is to touch God, and we do this in the flesh of our neighbor's hand at the peace and with the bread of Christ in our palm at communion.