

EASTER SUNDAY

Acts 10:34 - 43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14 - 24

1 Corinthians 15:19 - 26

John 20: 1 - 18 or

Luke 20: – 12

Notes on the Epistle Lesson

In this passage, Paul describes Jesus as the new Adam. We die because Adam died. However, since Jesus was raised from the dead we will now all live. This passage led to an interesting tradition in the early church. It was believed that the place of crucifixion was over the place where Adam was buried. As Jesus hung on the cross, his blood ran down his body and trickled into the ground. Some of Jesus' blood washed over Adam's bones and in so doing washed away the stain of original sin. Adam's sin was thought to be literally washed away by Jesus' blood and with Adam's sin removed; the stain of sin was removed from humanity. (The mosaic to the right, which is in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, depicts Adam's skull under the cross.)



Notes on the Gospel Lesson

Some notes on the passage from John:

The other three gospels say that several women came to the tomb on the morning of the resurrection. John lists only Mary of Magdala. This is not a contradiction as some have claimed. The other women were present; John mentions Mary because she is central to the events that he wishes to emphasize and the other women were not.

John relates that both Peter and the disciple "whom Jesus loved" ran to the tomb after hearing that Jesus' body was missing. In Luke's account only Peter is mentioned.

The description of the two angels sitting where Jesus' body had been - one at the head and the other at the feet - tells us that Jesus' body had been laid on an arcosolium shelf; a shelf used to prepare the body for wrapping and for the anointing with spices before it was placed in a niche within the tomb. The photo (right) shows such a shelf in a first century Jerusalem tomb.



Some notes on the passage from Luke:

Verse 1 states that “they came to the tomb”. The “they” refers to the same women who had come with Jesus from Galilee (Luke 23:33). The women are listed in Luke 24:10.

As mentioned above, only Peter runs to the tomb after hearing the women's report. Undoubtedly the other disciple listed in John's account went with him but just as only Mary is essential to the story as told by John, only Peter is essential in the story as related by Luke.