

EASTER DAY
Acts 10-34, 37-43
Col 3:1-4
Jn 20:1-9

On the third day there was a marriage between heaven and earth. It was the dawn of a new consciousness and the beginning of a new age.

This was the third day on which Mary Magdalene came to the tomb of Jesus and found the stone rolled away. But what had happened? St John prepares us for this moment from the beginning of his gospel account of Jesus. On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and it was here that Jesus gave us his first sign that transformation was beginning. His disciples saw this sign and believed in him. St John records that very shortly after the marriage in Cana, Jesus goes to Jerusalem and cleanses the Temple where he tells the Jews that, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn2:19). Of course he was speaking of the temple of his body, not the stone temple in which he spoke.

So what happened in the Garden of the Resurrection? John does not tell us that Jesus walked out of the tomb without his grave cloths. Nor did he say that Jesus was a ghost. His gospel begins with Jesus showing his first sign at a human marriage and ends with the celebration of the marriage of heaven and earth. In both marriages a transformation occurred. Water to wine and then Jesus' physical body into his resurrection body. On Easter Day the new age of eternity began. But eternity does not mean out of time or space, it means NOW, in this present moment, wherever our eyes are open to see. This is the sacrament of the present moment – encountering God in each present moment, bringing heaven to earth and eternity into our individual and community present.

In that Easter Garden many people saw things. Mary Magdalene saw the stone rolled away. She ran to tell the others, and Peter and John went to the Garden. John arrives first, looks into the tomb and sees the grave cloths on the ground. Peter doesn't just look in, he goes into the tomb and sees that Jesus' headcloth is still in its place. The Greek word St John uses for Peter seeing this is 'seeing' as a spectator sees. Peter looks at the external situation and tries to fathom what happened. John then goes in and he too sees and believes. The different Greek word the gospel uses here for 'seeing' means to 'see with insight, to see with the eyes of faith.' John saw and believed.

The gospel tells us that these two disciples went away to their own homes, but again the word used for 'homes' literally means 'towards themselves.' They begin their journey in which they will recognise or know Jesus again, not only by seeing him with their eyes, but knowing him within themselves. The key word is 'recognise' which means to 'perceive' that Jesus is indeed risen, that he lives, not only on the Father's right hand but also in ourselves.

The resurrection really did happen. As our first reading tells us, a small group were witnesses of this. They saw the risen Jesus, ate and drank with him and were instructed to proclaim what they witnessed. They could only announce to others what they themselves had seen and knew. Jesus has risen. The veil between heaven and earth has been torn apart. The

marriage between heaven and earth has been consummated and if we recognise the risen Jesus in ourselves, then our lives are hidden with Christ in God. We may still be on earth, but we live in eternity.

Jesus is risen. Know him in yourselves, in the Scriptures, in your baptism, in the sacrament of the altar and in your hearts in prayer. Then you will be able to be his true witness.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen.

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April 2022