

## OCTAVE OF EASTER: MONDAY

In our lock-down Easter week can be a special time of contemplating two things: the meaning of Christ's Resurrection and the meaning of Baptism.

In ancient days the newly-baptised attended Masses this week still wearing their white baptismal robes.

Throughout this Easter Week we shall continuously hear the first Apostolic preaching as proclaimed by Peter after the Lord's Resurrection. Peter is the lead this week covering the Acts of the Apostles from Chapter 2 to chapter 4. Today have the opening words of his proclamation (Acts 2: 14.22-32). We see him standing up, raising his voice, addressing the many Jews from abroad who all shared a sense of Jewish history. Peter sets Jesus within the framework of that history. Just as the living God guided the life-journey of his people, so He directed the life, death and resurrection of his chosen Messiah. I invite you all to follow this week's passages from Acts because they enable us enter fully into the mystery we have celebrated this Easter.

Turning to Gospel (Matthew 28:8-15) the mood of those Easter days is well pictured in today's gospel. Filled with awe and joy the women quickly left the tomb and ran to tell the disciples. They now knew that God's love is life-giving, and that God is more powerful than any evils we inflict on each other. Easter tells us that we do not walk through life alone even if we are lock-down. As Jesus says to the women, "Tell the others that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there."

The reaction of the chief priests and the elders reminds us that there will always be people who deny Easter and all that it means. That was so from the very beginning. The chief priests and the elders put out a story, to the effect that the disciples stole his body while the guards were asleep. We find modern versions of that anti-Easter story in our newspapers today at times. Atheists want to deny what God has done and put something trite in its place. But Easter week is here, let us not waste time with the anti-Easter stories. Let us, on our part, rejoice at what God has done and what he is capable of doing even when the whole world is at the standstill.