

Apostles is placed uncomfortably after Jesus presenting Himself to Thomas (last week.) Partly this is done because the next two weeks are also not connected to the time after the Resurrection of Jesus. Partly this is done to allow us to be prepared for the Ascension Day Lessons. The end of our Gospel Lesson was a promise by Jesus to send the "power from on high." As Jesus is no longer walking and talking among us, it is necessary that we are able to understand Him from the Scriptures. Therefore, Jesus made a promise to the Apostles and to us that we would have the Holy Spirit living in us to give us the power to believe.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ O Lord God, heavenly Father, Who is mighty in power and infinite in majesty, Who has created the Heaven and Earth and cares for each of them in their own special needs. We ask that You incline Your ear to us, and in Your wonderful mercy hear us.

We give thanks to You, everlasting God. You glorified Your Son Jesus in His Resurrection from the dead. After He had made Himself the Priest for all the world, He laid Himself on the altar of the cross as the Sacrifice, and died to reconcile sinners to You. Grant us the blessings of His infinite grace and Love.

We praise You that You transformed the "little while" of the crucifixion sadness and defeat into the joy and victory of the Resurrection. Help us to lay hold of Christ's promise of eternal life, and receive it in joy. Give us this glorious consolation by a true and living faith. Grant us the expectation and assurance that our eyes will yet behold Him, when, according to Your promise, our Redeemer will again stand on the Earth, and receive all who believe in Him into the kingdom prepared from the beginning of the world. Give to Your Church the knowledge of the wonder of the empty tomb, and let His name be proclaimed to the wonder and amazement of the world.

Give the comfort of Your Word to the sick, the sorrowful, the brokenhearted, and the perplexed. Cast out from our hearts all fear of death and the unknown. Instill in us patience in every adversity, and enable us to receive Your blessings in love and gratitude.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

Our eternal dwelling place is with You, O Father. Grant to us, as strangers and pilgrims on Earth, such a measure of Your grace that we may resist all evil, fight the good fight of faith, and in the end receive the victor's crown of life. For the sake of Jesus Christ we pray.

© Amen.

EASTER THREE

Chant Tone



Introit

In Your presence there is full | ness of joy;*

at Your right hand are pleasures for | evermore.

I will extol You, O Lord, for You have | drawn me up*

and have not let my foes rejoice | over me.

O Lord my God, I cried to | You for help,* and You have — healed me.

O Lord, You have brought up my soul from — Sheol;*

You restored me to life from among those who go down | to the pit.

Sing praises to the Lord, O | you His saints,*

and give thanks to His | holy name. For His anger is but for a moment, and His favor is for a — lifetime.*

Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the — morning.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be — ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

In Your presence there is full | ness of joy;*

at Your right hand are pleasures for | evermore.

(Antiphon, Psalm 16:11b;
Psalm 30:1-5)

Collect of the Day

O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Christ has risen | from the dead.*

[God the Father] has crowned Him with glory and — honor. He has given Him dominion over the works | of His hands;*

He has put all things un | der His feet.

(adapted from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: You have searched us and know us, O Lord, such knowledge is too wonderful for us to understand, for this we adore Your most Holy name. We are grateful for the accounts of witnesses who saw the Resurrected Lord with their own eyes and touched Him with their own hands. Because He rose from the dead, we can now have fellowship with You, with Him, and with one another. Open our minds that we may know Your will for us, and clothe us with power from on high to help us proclaim You to all the people of the world. This we ask in the name of and for the sake of Jesus Christ our risen Lord and Savior. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THE SEASON OF EASTER IS A TIME OF WATCHING THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE CARE OF THE APOSTLES. We live in the time of the New Testament Church as the flock gathered under Jesus Christ. Today we see that we are the witnesses of the events of Easter, and as witnesses we are the ones who will take the Gospel Message to all the world. We are never left alone in this effort as God has sent His Holy Spirit to live in us and bring to mind all the important things we should know.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Witnesses Of The Joy

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 16:11b;) Psalm 30:1-5

Psalm 16 talks about Christ. It was written by David, long before the events of which it speaks, yet, it contains a confident statement about the Resurrection. Psalm 30 is a psalm of thanksgiving for the deliverance given to David by God. They both work together to present us with the wonderful joy we feel for our deliverance in the Resurrection of Christ.

COLLECT

Easter is a time of joy and gladness. We ask that our knowledge of the resurrection of Jesus would give us perpetual gladness and eternal joy.

FIRST LESSON—Acts 3:11-21

I'm not clear why we begin with verse 11. It is somewhat akin to walking in to the middle of a movie. Peter and John were on their way to evening worship. The daily, ninth hour, 3PM worship was a standard that came from Joshua 7:6, and is continued in 1 Kings 18, Daniel 9 and Ezra 9. As you know, Jesus fulfilled the lament of worship as His death was at 3PM. They had been confronted by a lame man, whom they healed in the name of Jesus. This event gave Peter the opportunity to proclaim the sermon that makes up our text. Luke, (the author of Acts) clearly understood the irony and significance of the miracle connected to the Ninth Hour, because it allowed Peter to proclaim salvation to the crowds at the very hour when our salvation had been won.

GRADUAL—(adapted from) Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7, Psalm 8:6
This compilation of Scripture is a statement of the Resurrection followed by the glory and honor given to Christ by our Father.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 John 3:1-7

John reminds us that, in calling us "children," in His Love, our heavenly Father has accomplished a change; God has taken us from, "not a people" and made us over into, "His people." The change took place in our lives because of God's Love and the merits of Jesus Christ. It is a change in our relationship with God and a change in our essential being (from the corruptible and temporal to the incorruptible and immortal.) All this change has yet to be fully realized by us, but has come true in the life, death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus. We now have a new relationship with God and with each other. We are made sheep of the fold of Christ.

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 24:36-49

Luke wrapped up the 40 days between the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus from verse 36 to verse 53. He merged many events into three to five hours. The result is that this Lesson of Jesus visiting all Eleven