

Background to scripture readings in April

Sunday April 3

Acts 5:27-32

Peter and John have continued to preach the Good News. They have been arrested, have escaped from prison, and the temple police have picked them up to bring before the Sanhedrin again.

Revelation 1:4-8

John writes “to the seven churches of Asia”. “Seven” symbolizes totality, and John is also speaking to all churches, everywhere.

John 20:19-31

On Easter morning, Mary Magdalene has told the disciples (who are afraid that they may suffer the same fate as did Jesus on Friday) “I have seen the Lord.” In the evening of that day, Jesus appears in their midst.

Sunday April 10

Acts 9:1-6 St. Luke has described how “Saul was persecuting the church by entering house after house; dragging off and imprisoning both men and women.” Now we will see his great transformation from persecutor (Saul) to evangelist (St. Paul).

Revelation 5:11-14 St. John writes in a style familiar in his time, especially in Jewish circles. A key question at that time was: *what will life after death be like?*

John 21:1-19 Since his resurrection, Jesus has twice appeared to the disciples in the house where he hosted the Last Supper. Now he appears to seven disciples near the Sea of Galilee. Note: “Tiberias” was the Roman name for the lake.

Sunday April 17

Acts 9:36-43 Peter is visiting the region northwest of Jerusalem near modern Tel Aviv where he meets some Christians. In the healing of a paralysed man, he has said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you!”

Revelation 7:9-17 The Lamb, (the Christ), has revealed God’s plan for the end-times. Our reading describes the fate of the faithful. They will suffer during the end of this era but will survive as God gives them eternal life.

John 10:22-30 Jesus has told people that he is divine and existed before Abraham. What he does witnesses to his oneness with God. Only those who believe understand his Messiah-ship.

Sunday April 24

Acts 11:1-18

Peter has been instrumental in the conversion of Cornelius, a Gentile and a Roman officer to Christianity. Peter has returned to Judea where church members of Jewish origin want to know how Gentiles can become Christians.

Revelation 21:1-6

The book of Revelation is “the revelation of Christ” made through John. In a vision, John has seen the destruction of the old city, and of the old heaven and earth. Now he sees the new creation as God's love triumphs.

John 13:31-35

Jesus prepares his followers for his departure. After the Last Supper, he has washed the feet of his disciples and predicted his betrayal. Judas has gone out into the night –to commit his dark deed