**THE SEASON OF EASTER**

**2019 – Series C**

*For further information see “Gathered Guests,” pages 69-71, 309-316, 552/555.*

Easter is not a day, but rather a season: seven Sundays, fifty days.

The Easter season: announces the resurrection of the Lord,

 examines various responses to that announcement,

 explicates the meaning of the resurrection,

 and applies the resurrection to our own lives

 (both here and now and in eternity).

Note that six sets of “propers” are assigned to the beginning of Easter: Vigil, Sunrise, Day, Evening/Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. *See LSB, page xviii.*

**Easter Day**

First Lesson, Isaiah 65:17-25

The prophecy of “a new heaven and a new earth” – fulfilled in part by the Lord’s resurrection (already) and brought to fruition at his Second Coming (not yet).

Second Lesson, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 (chapter 15 is “the resurrection chapter”)

 “Christ has been raised, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

Holy Gospel, Luke 24:1-12

 “‘He is not here, but has risen.’ . . . but these words seemed to them [the apostles] an idle tale.”

**Easter 2**

*Beginning with this Sunday, note that the First Lesson is no longer read from the Old Testament but from Acts, the Second Lesson is no longer read from the Epistles but from Revelation, and the Holy Gospel is no longer read from Luke but from John. This might suggest a more in-depth reading of these three biblical writings throughout the Easter season.*

*The readings from Acts demonstrates the impact of the resurrection on the life and mission of the early church. The selections from Revelation give us the perspective of “the world to come.” And the Gospel readings highlight responses to and/of the consequences of Our Lord’s resurrection.*

First Lesson, Acts 5:12-20 (21-32)

 Resurrection power was entrusted to the apostles who did “many signs and wonders.”

Second Lesson, Revelation 1:4-18

 “. . . Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. . . . I died, and behold I am alive forevermore.”

The Holy Gospel, John 20:19-31

*Note that every year (in Series A, B, and C) that the story is always told of doubting Thomas.”*

 “Unless I see . . . and place my finger . . . and place my hand . . . I will never believe.”

**Easter 3**

First Lesson, Acts 9:1-22

 The risen Lord converts Saul (the persecutor) into Paul (the apostle).

 *Note: this conversion story is told three times in Acts (!); see chapters 22 and 26.*

Second Lesson, Revelation 5:(1-7) 8-14

 “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

Holy Gospel, John 21:1-14 (15-19)

 The risen Christ was raised bodily (still a man!) and now prepares breakfast for his disciples. *Jesus Christ is true God and true man, even after the resurrection.*

**Easter 4**

First Lesson, Acts 20:17-35

 Paul explains the mission that he had “received from the Lord Jesus.”

 *Paul has become “an eyewitness” of the resurrection.*

Second Lesson, Revelation 7:9-17

 John is given a glimpse into heaven – “a great multitude . . . crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”

Holy Gospel, John 10:22-30

*The Fourth Sunday of Easter is “Good Shepherd Sunday” and portion of John 10 is read each year (Series A, John 10:1-10; Series B, John 10:11-18; Series C, John10:22-30).*

 The Good Shepherd gives eternal life to sheep, and they will never perish!

**Easter 5**

First Lesson, Acts 11:1-18

 “. . . the Gentiles also had received the Word of God. . . . Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to [eternal] life.”

Second Lesson, Revelation 21:1-7

 “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth” – *thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah (see Easter Day).*

Holy Gospel, John 16:12-22

 When the risen Christ is no longer visibly on earth (*anticipating the Ascension*), the promised “the Spirit of Truth” will guide his followers (*anticipating Pentecost*).

**Easter 6**

First Lesson, Acts 16:9-15

 The conversion of Lydia (a Gentile, a woman).

Second Lesson, Revelation 21:9-14, 21-27

 “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb”

Holy Gospel, John 16:23-33

 “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

*On the fortieth day after his resurrection, the Lord ascended into heaven, thus completing his earthly mission. Today he “sits at the right hand of the Father” and “will come again with glory.” In 2019 the Ascension is celebrated on Thursday, May 30.*

**Easter 7**

First Lesson, Acts 1:12-26

Matthias is chosen to replace Judas among “the Twelve” – the Church is formed to continue the mission of [the now visibly absent] Christ to the world.

Second Lesson, Revelation 22:1-6 (7-11), 12-20

 “‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

Holy Gospel, John 17:20-26

*The Seventh Sunday of Easter has us listen to Jesus’ “High Priestly Prayer” (prayed just prior to his passion and death); a portion of which is read each year (Series A, John 17:1-11; Series B, John 17:11b-19; Series C, John17:20-26). The Church believes that what Jesus prayed for then, he continues to intercede for us today (Hebrews 7:25).*

 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one . . .”