

correct basis, the Old Testament contains a 3 day leitmotif in a large number of texts. A couple of examples are: (i) "Moses stretched out his hand towards heaven, and for three days there was thick darkness over the whole of Egypt" (Ex. 10:22) and (ii) the three days which Jonah spent in the belly of the fish (Jon. 2:1). It is this leitmotif which is encapsulated in St Luke's Gospel and St Paul's epistle when they record that earlier scriptures foreshadowed resurrection on the third day.

So, when we say the words "according to the Scriptures" we can be confident in its truth since both Jesus and St Paul tell us so. The fact that we cannot pinpoint their precise foundation in the Old Testament keeps scholars fascinated but ultimately thwarted by the limits of human understanding. {1 See Also Isaiah 53:12}

Stephen S

Entrance antiphon: *When a profound silence covered all things and night was in the middle of its course, your all-powerful Word, O Lord, bounded from heaven's royal throne*

First Reading: Ecclesiasticus 24 1-2, 8-12

Psalm 147: Response: *The Word was made flesh, and lived among us.*

Second Reading: Ephesians 1 3-6, 15-18

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Glory be to you, O Christ, proclaimed to the pagans; Glory be to you, O Christ, believed in by the world. Alleluia!

Gospel: John 1 1-18

Memorial Acclamation:

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.



Second Sunday after Christmas Sunday Cycle C, 2022

Weekly reflection.

The Creed (3): What do we mean when we say: "... **and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.**"?

The focus of this note is on the words highlighted. In accordance with which scriptural writing(s) did Jesus rise from the dead on the third day? There are many references in the Old Testament to the Messiah rising again, e.g. Psalms 16:10: "...you will not abandon me to Sheol, you cannot allow your faithful servant to see the abyss" (Jerusalem Bible); perhaps more clearly in the New Catholic Bible: "For you will not abandon me to the netherworld or allow your Holy One to suffer corruption." 1 See also Isaiah 53:10-12. However, where did the scriptures which preceded Jesus foretell that He would rise on the third day?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church does not directly assist, though the basis of the statement, 1 Corinthians 15:4, is cited [para 639]. St Paul said: "...on the third day he was raised to life, in accordance with the scripture". Also, St Luke's Gospel at 24:46 records Jesus telling the apostles after the resurrection: "So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead." Yet neither passage answers the critical question. There is no straightforward response so far as human research can answer. There are innumerable learned discussions and debates. This is a summary of three of the main strands: (1) "According to the Scriptures" refers only to the rising from the dead and not to it happening on the third day. Thus, rising from the dead is prefigured in the Old Testament, but not necessarily on the third day. (2) Hosea ch.6 v1-2 says: "Come let us return to Yahweh...on the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his presence". Though this passage primarily refers to Israel returning to God, that restoration could occur only through Jesus' resurrection. (3) Whether or not Hosea is the