

Second Sunday of Easter
Cycle B RCL

Acts 4:32-35

The author of Luke-Acts tells us that the Christians of Jerusalem experimented with a communal lifestyle, an experiment not shared by the Christian churches in other lands. The economic difficulties of this experiment may have been the reason Paul had to make a collection for the church in Jerusalem. See 2 Corinthians 8-9.

Psalm 133

This is likely a song from the wisdom schools that describes an ideal harmony and love of siblings in a family setting with two intertwined metaphors of the blessings of such a relationship. Based on the extension of the last Hebrew verse, some investigators have considered verse 5 (Hebrew verse 3b) a gloss (addition) that “adapts” the otherwise secular wisdom psalm to a cultic setting.

1 John 1:1-2:2

First John resembles in language and style the Gospel of John, but the Epistle is more abstract in its theological language than the Gospel. Like the Gospel, the Epistle too claims that its author was an eyewitness of the events of salvation (1:1-4), though few researchers believe the Gospel and the Epistle actually have the same author. We date the Epistle before 117 CE because it was Polycarp of Smyrna cited it in a letter of that date, and it is possible that the work derives from Smyrna’s nearby sister city of Ephesus. The strong emphasis on forgiveness of sin in 1:5-2:2 suggests that the author wrote to combat the effects on his readers of a libertine Gnosticism that saw no need for moral conduct.

John 20:19-31

The story of “doubting Thomas” was the original ending to the Gospel of John to which a later hand added our present chapter 21. The Gospel began with the assertion that the story of Jesus was the appearance of the creative Word of God (*logos*) in human history, the “word” that was both “with God” and “was God” (John 1:1). The author allowed the sorrowful doubter to connect the end of the book with its beginning by calling Jesus “My Lord, and my God” (20:28).

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