

Donnybrook

3 September 2021

Welcome

Next Sunday's Gospel from Mark is the scene at Caesarea Philippi. It is a key episode in Mark and it contains a key question: who do you say I am? The answer unlocks not only the identity of Jesus but it also tells us who we are.

Topic

Something similar may be said of the extraordinary first reading this morning.

Steps

Many years ago, a great American bible scholar, Raymond Brown, commented on our first reading:

How within fifty years (at the latest) did Christians come to believe that about a Galilean preacher who was crucified as a criminal?

It does make you think. The evolution of understanding happened really because of the resurrection of Jesus – because it those days resurrection was understood to have something to do with the ends of time, and so of cosmic significance.

This deeper understanding is very appealing today. We have a scientific narrative about the evolution of the universe and we have our Christian narrative. Text such as our first reading are an invitation to join the narrative – as has been done by our own Dermot Lane in Balally parish.

But it is not just the grand vision. We are in there too, we read:

Now the church is his body
and he is its head.

As he is the Beginning,
he was first to be born from the dead,
so that he should be first in every way;
because God wanted all perfection
to be found in him
and all things to be reconciled through him and for him,
everything in heaven and everything on earth,
when he made peace
by his death on the cross.

Conclusion

This is who we are and this is what we celebrate at the Eucharist.