



Easter Meditation

Our Mission to Proclaim Resurrection

Luke 24:1-12

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen.”

With these strikingly simple words, the resurrection of Jesus is first announced to a small company of women who had come out at early dawn with ointments and spices, to minister to the body of Jesus. They, in turn, are ministered to by these heavenly messengers. These women received that first Easter proclamation. “He is not here but has risen.”

I’m sure they were speechless at first and silent before such a profound mystery. The Scriptures say they were amazed and terrified, filled with awe, perplexed. There must have been a shock that seized their beings, but they seem to be able to hold the tension of the mystery at the same time. However, the messengers go on to further reveal to them an understanding of this event. “Remember how he told you, first the suffering and death and then resurrection.” And then, only silence.

Intuitively, the women did seem to get it. It’s all happening as He promised. It’s over here! This work is accomplished! Jesus, in love and obedience, has perfectly fulfilled the Father’s Divine Plan. What now? Here comes the shift in consciousness. Here comes a change in direction. For now, yes, they are to leave the empty tomb

and go tell the brothers. But the bigger NOW is the dawning realization that they - and we - are left with the work. We are the ones now who must pass all the way through our dyings and risings with Him and in the power of his death and resurrection. We must pass on with our lives the whole Easter proclamation. First endure the suffering and death and then comes a resurrection! Each one of us must live deeply the same Paschal mystery.

Yes, in the moment, it's time to leave the empty tomb. "*Why are you looking for the living among the dead?*" And so, they leave this place marking death and burial and go back to the living ones. They go back to the Eleven, telling the brothers and other disciples all that they had seen and heard at the tomb. Peter goes out to see for himself. In truth it surely is no "*idle tale*" the women speak of. In time, Peter and John and the others deepen into their own realization of the resurrection of Jesus.

So announcing resurrection is passed on from these heavenly messengers to the beloved women friends, to the eleven apostles. Later, Paul will have his own encounter with the Risen Christ. He tells the early Christian communities of the power of the Resurrection working in his own and other's lives. Today's Epistle to the Romans is Paul's proclamation of how certain he is of this mystery working throughout humanity:

"If we have been united with him in a death like his,
we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

He keeps telling the story, community after community, always with a deep faith conviction: "*I am certain of this...*" and "*I know the power of Christ resurrected has changed me ...*" and "*I know my Redeemer lives.*"

The telling of the miracle of resurrection – not just Jesus' – but our own personal experiences of undergoing the Paschal Mystery - has come down to us through generations of faith witnesses who proclaimed with their lives the power of transformation that has totally changed their lives. Life has changed not ended!

And now this Easter day, in the hearing of this resurrection of Jesus, it is a mission passed on to you and to me. In this long tradition and ancestry of faith, **we are the 'proclaimers'**. We must tell the story of how we have passed through our deaths and dark nights of struggles, doubts, disappointments, agonies, betrayals and deep

loneliness. We must proclaim how, in due time, God raised us up and restored us to a new freedom, a new abundant life, with joy and hope and possibility once again. Yes, even in our mortal bodies, we came to experience a taste of resurrection. God's power within changed us. In this new place of transformation, we even came to forget the pain and struggle! For, it is a new, radically new life that we live in this resurrected life. Resurrection proclaims what happens to all that went before. Truly, the sin, the sorrow, the struggle are all swallowed up in this death. Oh Death, where is thy sting! The victory is won!

It seems to have taken a long time for the reality, depth and impact of Jesus' resurrection to settle into our humanity. My prayer for each one of us this day is that we may not keep looking for Jesus among the dead stories of our hurtful pasts. May we shed those grave cloths of painful memories and leave them behind us in this empty tomb. Accept the Easter gift of the stone being rolled away. Allow the power of God to raise us out of those negative, death-full places. Walk out of our entombments in whatever graves of fear or shame or selfishness we may have found ourselves buried under for a time.

"He is not here. He is risen and you will find Him among the living." Yes, it's Easter and it is time now to leave the empty tomb and walk into a newness of life. Those heavenly messengers told us something very revealing in that first proclamation. That is, that the Easter mission is ours. Go and tell the others. May we return to our homes and families with our lives changed, renewed and transformed by these Paschal mysteries we have celebrated over these past 40 days and Easter Triduum.

Be as certain as the great St. Paul in our proclamations that sin and shame and selfishness are swallowed up in those daily dyings. In Jesus' resurrection there is a new freedom and joy and taste of glory filling our bodies and spirits. The great suffering and the great love have in truth effected real transformation. The victory is won. *"It is night truly blessed when heaven is wedded to earth and we are all reconciled with God. We are alive with God."* Yes, all creation is telling the glory of God! This is the Easter proclamation. Because of Christ, there is a transformation of such great magnitude made possible for all persons, for all creation.

So let us go about our Easter mission ...

Go amongst the living. Find Christ in every person, in every creature, in all creation. *Look for Me and I will let you find Me. I am alive. I am everywhere.* This is knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection that has exploded upon the earth... beyond the grave, beyond time and particular geographical space. The Risen Christ is no longer limited by place, space and time. This Christ is living within each one of us.

So let us reach for those Alleluias. Stretch ourselves to some new depths of faith and behold our Risen Christ, our Beloved already here, in our midst, speaking our names, and calling us to come, walk with Me into newness of life.

In communion this Easter Sunday, taste and see his glory shining in you and through you. We proclaim the Resurrection of Jesus with our whole lives.

Carrying Grace It is enough for me to know that God is love. Alleluia.

