

Easter 2022  
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish  
Father Craig Looney  
*Saint John 20.1-10*

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We don't have to stretch our imaginations very far to identify with Mary Magdalene and the disciples who witnessed the Crucifixion. We went home Friday afternoon lost in our own thoughts about the event we reenacted during the Good Friday Liturgy.

Last night we entered a darkened church. We lighted a fire. We blessed and lighted the Paschal Candle. Then we lighted the candles on the High Altar. Then church lights were turned on...symbolizing Jesus returning from the darkness of Good Friday...THE LIGHT OF CHRIST has returned.

Like Mary Magdalene and the disciples...we spending the time from Good Friday evening until Easter morning waiting for what was next. That time of waiting is over...Jesus has risen...just as he said he would.

We have a distinct advantage over Mary Magdalene and the disciples. We know how the story turns out. We believe what the world tells us is impossible really happened. Jesus rose from the dead...we believe this is true because of the eyewitness accounts of those who saw it for themselves.

When Mary Magdalene first went to Jesus's grave she found it opened and empty. Convinced his body had been stolen...she runs back to Peter and the others. Peter and John then ran to the grave to check things out for themselves.

John makes a point of telling us he ran faster than Peter and got to the grave first. We can imagine John retelling the story later...how he left poor Peter eating the dust behind him. There is a bit of Easter humor in John telling us he was the faster runner.

Later Mary Magdalene will return to cry outside the empty grave. When she turns around she sees Jesus but doesn't recognize him...she thinks he is the gardener. She only recognizes Jesus when he calls her by name, "Mary." Her sorrow was instantly replaced by indescribable joy.

Saint Paul writes in his First Letter to the Corinthians, "*Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive*".

The resurrection of Jesus has made possible our own resurrection to eternal life. Because Jesus rose from the dead in his own body, our own bodies will rise from the dead on the Last Day.

After Jesus made himself known to Mary Magdalene he gave her instructions: "Go tell the others what you have seen. I have returned, just as I said I would".

Jesus calls each of us by name and asks us to go tell others what we know to be true. What do we say to them and to each other?

...Alleluia. The Lord is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

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