

Mark 16: 1-8

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Meditation: Finally we come to the end... or actually the beginning! Yes, indeed, for according to the New Testament, the Resurrection is the beginning of the new age. The Resurrection is about the vindication and exaltation of the crucified one. He whom the world rejected and killed, he whom worldly justice condemned a criminal has been vindicated as the righteous one, the just one, God's truest representative in the flesh, God's very soul. But what we encounter in the gospel is a group of faithful yet confused followers. What does it all mean? Can we believe that Jesus is no longer dead, but alive! What does his life mean for us and our lives? We are left with the challenge of faith. Can we believe that this tortured, mangled, crucified human being has been raised from the dead to reign with God as God's anointed and appointed head over all things? Can we believe that evil does not have the last word, but rather the power of divine love must conquer and will conquer all evil and banish it forever?

Faith is about trust in the present and hope in a future. What we trust and what we hope for is shaped by the love revealed in the Christ. It is the kingdom of God spiritually present in the world and in communities where love reigns. It is about the Spirit of Jesus (the Holy Spirit) being a living presence within us in the midst of a broken and conflicted world. But all of this is saying far more than the gospel is telling us at this point. Can we believe what we are being told? The women leave in amazement and terror. They tell no-one. They, like we, will have to be given the eyes to see Jesus and the confidence to proclaim him. How will we proclaim that Christ is risen in our lives, our commitments, our connections, our passions, our relationships and our efforts?

Prayer: Lord God, what a spectacular claim! Jesus is risen. He is no longer a dead corpse. The new age has begun where sin, death and destruction need no longer be feared as sovereign. They can kill my body, poison my mind, but they cannot destroy my spirit rooted in your love. I have followed this journey through the gospel. I have confronted the valleys of the shadow of death within myself. I have also encountered moments of clarity, insight, and transformative energy to be an authentic disciple where I am living. Keep me true to this way of living and journeying, O God. Give me the courage and the commitment to continue to face the crosses in my life so that I am

granted new experiences of resurrection to refresh, guide, and deepen my oneness with you. In the name of the crucified, risen Christ who is my life and my all I pray; Amen.