

“Come – Go – See”

The crowds had gathered all weekend. Families swarmed to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. It's just what they did. It was tradition. And then, the world is turned upside down!

We are given to see the Resurrection of Our Lord through the eyes of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Their festival weekend had been disrupted. Their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, had been arrested, crucified – He died, and was hastily buried. Now they were just doing what needed to be done – going to the tomb to give Jesus a proper burial.

That past Friday, when Jesus had breathed His last, “the earth shook, and the rocks were split.” Now, at dawn on Sunday morning – the peace and quiet is shattered by a “great earthquake”!

And if that were not enough, “an angel of the Lord descended from heaven” – taking away the stone that sealed the tomb of Jesus. “His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.”

The guards standing watch at the tomb are reduced to trembling and became like dead men. Nothing is stable! No one can stand! But then the greatest tremor of all – the message of the angel.

“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay. Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and behold, He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him.”

Their world is shaken – turned upside down. Frightened Mary and Mary don't know what to believe. But the Lord gives them a Word – a Word to trust – a Word to hold onto – a Word that directs their lives. “Come and see,” the angel says. “Go and tell,” he directs. And, “there they will see me,” he promises.

Whether it's when you are just trudging through life, doing what you do – or – your world is turned upside down – the Lord proclaims His Resurrection Gospel into your ears – so that you may not fear – so that you may have something to hold onto – so that you may have hope, for this life, and for eternity.

“Do not be afraid,” the Lord says to you. Do not be afraid to come to church, to stand before the Lord, afraid that He will have nothing to do with you, because He knows your sin. Don't stubbornly refuse to acknowledge your sin – so that it becomes your taskmaster – binding you, enslaving you.

“Come and see,” the angel said. See that the body of Jesus is no longer in the tomb. Do you know what that means – what that means for you? It means that your sin is forgiven – the chains that bind you have been broken. It means you are free.

Do you know what put Jesus in that tomb in the first place? It was your sin, and mine. Jesus, the Son of God, was born into this world, taking on or human flesh and blood – so that He could take the sin of the whole world (your sin and mine) – and with His body pay the penalty for all sin, and with His life, break the chains of death.

There's a reason why Easter is a great celebration. Because Jesus' dead body is no longer in the grave – because He is raised to life again – this shows that all sin has been taken care of. “It is finished.” Your sin is forgiven.

This is why Christ continues to invite you to church – to “come and see.” Come, with all that burdens and weighs you down – come and confess your sin, your unworthiness, to God – and see His underserved love toward you – as He absolves you of all sin, and sets you free.

The Resurrected Christ gathers you to Himself to forgive your sin – and where there is the forgiveness of sins, there is the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. “Come and see” – that in Christ, you are resurrected to life everlasting!

“Go and tell” His disciples that He is risen from the dead. Again, the Resurrection Gospel is proclaimed into your ears – no matter what is going on in your life. The Lord Himself, risen from the dead, wants you to hear this good news.

The resurrected Christ sends forth his messengers to proclaim His Word so that you may hear the living voice of Christ. His Church is given to preach His objective truth into a world asking, “What is truth?” His Church speaks His Word so that the mysteries of God might be revealed – so that man may know that the God who created him has redeemed them, and promises to dwell with him always.

“Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” The Lord has also revealed to you where He promises to be found.

The resurrected Jesus institutes Holy Baptism before He ascends into heaven. By this washing, He makes you to be His disciple – one who follows Him, who lives by faith in Him. In this washing He cleanses you from all iniquity – adopts you as His own child – and makes you an heir of His kingdom.

The resurrected Jesus institutes the Lord’s Supper – in which He promises to give you His resurrected and living Body and Blood. The very Body and Blood offered in sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world – is given you at His Table, to release you from all your sin.

Indeed, the Resurrection Gospel turns your life upside down. It brings you from death to life – from slavery to freedom – from despair to everlasting joy.

That’s why every Sunday is a “little Easter” – so that you may see that the tomb is empty – so that you may hear the good news of your sins forgiven – so that you may see the resurrected Christ who comes to serve you, to give you His gifts, to live with you for all eternity.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! [He is risen, indeed! Alleluia]