

Tuesday in the Octave of Easter

Gospel text (Jn 20:11-18): Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the Body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken my Lord, and I don’t know where they laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” She thought it was the gardener and said to him, “Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, “Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and then reported what he had told her.

“Mary went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’”

Fr. Antoni ORIOL i Tataret
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Today, in the figure of Mary Magdalene we may contemplate two levels of acceptance of our Savior: the first one, imperfect; the second one, complete. According to the first one, Mary appears as the most sincere of Jesus' disciples. She follows Him, unmatched Master; heroically, she sticks to Jesus, crucified because of His love; she looks for Him, beyond death, buried and missing. How full of admirable and humble submission to her “Lord” are her two exclamations that, as two unique pearls, the evangelist John has kept for us: “They have taken my Lord,

and I don't know where they laid him." (Jn 20:13); "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." (Jn 20:15). History has seen few disciples as loyal and full of affection as Mary Magdalene.

Notwithstanding, the good news of this Tuesday, octave of Easter, far exceeds all ethical uprightness and religious faith in an admirable Jesus, but in the last instance, death, to take us to an ambience of faith in Jesus Christ Resurrected. A Jesus Christ that, in the first moment, taking her from the level of imperfect faith, asks Mary Magdalene: "Woman, why are you weeping?" (Jn 20:15) To which, with myopic eyes, she replies to as a farmer only interested in her own anxiety would; as Jesus, now, that in a second and definitive moment, calls her by her name: "Mary"! to move and shake her up with resurrection and life, that is, with Himself, Resurrected and Alive Forever. Outcome? Mary Magdalene believer and Mary Magdalene, apostle: "Mary went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'" (Jn 20:18).

It is not infrequent today to find many Christians that cannot clearly see what will come after this life and who, therefore, have doubts about Jesus' resurrection. Am I among them? On the other hand, there are also those Christians who have enough faith to follow Jesus privately, but who are afraid of apostolically proclaiming it. Do I belong to these? If this were the case, let us tell Him, as Mary Magdalene did: "Master!", let us cling to His feet and let us go to our brothers and tell them: —The Lord has risen and I have seen Him!

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"It is no great thing to believe that Christ died. This the pagans, Jews, and all the wicked believe; in a word, all believe that Christ died. But that He rose from the dead is the belief of Christians. To believe that He rose again, this we deem of great moment." (Saint Augustine)

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"In Jesus' Resurrection a new possibility of human existence is attained that affects everyone and that opens up a future, a new kind of future, for mankind." (Benedict XVI)

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“(…) The shock provoked by the Passion was so great that at least some of the disciples did not at once believe in the news of the Resurrection. Far from showing us a community seized by a mystical exaltation, the Gospels present us with disciples demoralized and frightened. For they had not believed the holy women returning from the tomb and had regarded their words as an ‘idle tale’ (Lk 24:11; cf. Mk 16:11,13). When Jesus reveals himself to the Eleven on Easter evening, ‘he upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen’ (Mk 16:14).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 643)