

Monday in the Octave of Easter

Gospel text (Mt 28,8-15): The women left the tomb at once in holy fear, yet with great joy, and they ran to tell the news to the disciples. Suddenly, Jesus met them on the way and said, «Peace». The women approached him, embraced his feet and worshiped him. But Jesus said to them, «Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to set out for Galilee; there they will see me».

While the women were on their way, the guards returned to the city and some of them reported to the chief priests all that had happened. The chief priests met with the Jewish authorities and decided to give the soldiers a good sum of money, with this instruction, «Say that his disciples came by night while you were asleep, and stole the body of Jesus. If Pilate comes to know of this, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble». The soldiers accepted the money and did as they were told. This story has circulated among the Jews until this day.

«The women left the tomb at once in holy fear, yet with great joy, and they ran to tell the news to the disciples»

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Today, the joy of resurrection has made brave messengers out of those women that went to Christ's tomb. The angel's announcement of the Master's resurrection filled their hearts with «great joy». And, immediately after, they “ran out”, to tell the news to the Apostles. They simply could not stand idle, their hearts bursting should they not let the disciples know about the great news. Paul's words resound in our souls: «For the love of Christ constrains us» (2Cor 5:14).

Jesus contrives to a “chance meeting” with Mary of Magdala and the other Mary

—this is how Christ rewards their courage to look for him early in the morning—, and He does it too with all men and women of this world. Not only, because of his Incarnation, He has, in a certain way, become a man too.

Women's reactions before the Lord express the deepest attitudes of human beings before He who is our Creator and Redeemer: submission —«embraced his feet» (Mt 28:9)— and worship. What a lesson for all of us regarding what our attitude ought to be always before Christ in the Eucharist!

«Do not be afraid» (Mt 28:10), Jesus tells the pious women. Afraid of our Lord? Never, as He is the Love of loves! Afraid to lose him? Yes, because we are well aware of our feebleness. This is why we embrace his feet so strongly. As the Apostles in the stormy sea and as the disciples of Emaus when they beg him: Lord, do not leave us!

And the Master sends the women to his disciples so they can see him too. This is also our task, and our divine mission, since the day of our baptism: to proclaim Christ all over the World «so that everybody may find Christ, so that Christ may join each one of us in our journey through life, with the power of the truth (...) contained in the mystery of Encarnation and Redemption, with the power of the love He irradiates» (John Paul II).