Monday in the Octave of Easter

Gospel text (*Mt* 28:8-15): Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce the news to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had happened. The chief priests assembled with the elders and took counsel; then they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep.’ And if this gets to the ears of the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” The soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has circulated among the Jews to the present day.

“Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce the news to his disciples”

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Today, the joy of the Resurrection makes the women who had gone to the tomb brave messengers of Christ. "A great joy" fills their hearts upon hearing the angel's announcement of the Master's Resurrection. They run out of the tomb to announce it to the Apostles. They cannot remain inactive, and their hearts would burst if they did not communicate this to all the disciples. Paul's words resonate in our souls: "For the love of Christ impels us” (2Cor 5:14).

Jesus "meets" them: He does so with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary - thus Christ thanks them and rewards their daring act of seeking Him early in the morning - and He does so with all men and women of the world. And even more so: He has united Himself to every man through His Incarnation, in a certain way.

The reactions of the women in the presence of the Lord express the deepest attitudes of the human being before He Who is our Creator and Redeemer: submission - "embraced his feet" (Mt 28:9) - and worship. What a great lesson to be learned before the Eucharistic Christ!

"Do not be afraid" (Mt 28:10), says Jesus to the holy women. Afraid of the Lord? Never, He is the Love of loves! Fearful of losing Him? Yes, because we know our own weaknesses. This is why we hold very strongly to His feet. Like the Apostles in the stormy sea and the disciples of Emmaus, we ask Him: Lord, do not leave us!

And the Master sends the women to tell the good news to the disciples. This is also our task and divine mission since the day of our baptism: to announce Christ throughout the world, as Saint John Paul II said, "so that each person may be able to find Christ, in order that Christ may walk with each person the path of life, with the power of the truth… contained in the mystery of the Incarnation and the Redemption and with the power of the love that is radiated by that truth."

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “O what wonderful good news! He who for our sake became like us in order to make us his brothers, now presents to his true Father his own humanity in order to draw all his kindred up after him.” (Saint Gregory of Nyssa)

- “Today, more than ever before, veneration is necessary. One of the greatest perversions of our time is that we are asked to worship the human leaving aside the divine. Idols causing death do not deserve any worshipping; only the God of life deserves worship and glory.” (Francis)

- “Mary Magdalene and the holy women (…) were the first to encounter the Risen One (Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1; Jn 19:31,42). Thus the women were the first messengers of Christ's Resurrection for the apostles themselves (Cf Lk 24:9-10). They were the next to whom Jesus appears: first Peter, then the Twelve. Peter had been called to strengthen the faith of his brothers, (Cf I Cor 15:5-; Lk 22:31-32) and so sees the Risen One before them; it is on the basis of his testimony that the community exclaims: ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ (Lk 24;34).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 641)