

Tuesday in the Octave of Easter

Gospel text (Jn 20,11-18): Mary of Magdala 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 of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and then reported what he had told her.

«Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’»

+ Fr. Antoni ORIOL i Tataret
(Vic, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, in the figure of Mary Magdalene, we can contemplate two levels of acceptance of our Savior: the first is imperfect, the second, is complete, unconditional. From the beginning, Mary appears to us as a most sincere disciple of Jesus. She follows him, the incomparable Teacher; she is heroically adherent to him who was crucified for love; she looks for him, beyond death, his burial and disappearance. How impregnated with admirable dedication to their "Lord" are the two exclamations that the Evangelist St John has preserved for us, like

incomparable jewels: "They have taken the body of my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him" (Jn 20:13); «Sir, if you have taken Him, tell me where you have put it, and I will take it»! (Jn 20:15). Few disciples have contemplated history, so affectionately and loyally as Mary of Magdala.

However, the good news of today, this Tuesday of the Eighth Week of Easter, infinitely surpass all ethical goodness and religious faith in a Jesus who one can admire, but who is ultimately dead; and they take us to the realm of faith in the Risen One. Jesus who, at first, leaving her on the level of imperfect faith, addresses the Magdalene asking her: "Woman, why are you crying?" (Jn 20:15) and to which she, with shortsightedness responds as one would to a gardener who is interested in her distress. Jesus, now, in a second definitive moment, challenges her with her name: "Mary!" and he shock her to the core speaking to her about resurrection and life, that is, of Himself, as the Risen One, living forever. The result? Mary Magdalene the believer and Mary Magdalene the apostle: "It was Mary Magdalene and she told her disciples that she had seen the Lord" (Jn 20:18).

Today is not uncommon for Christians who do not see clearly beyond this life and, therefore, who doubt the resurrection of Jesus. Am I among them? Similarly, there are many Christians who have enough faith to follow him privately, but who fear to proclaim him apostolically. Am I part of that group? If this were the case, like Mary Magdalene, let us say to him: "Master! Let us embrace ourselves at his feet and go to meet our brethren and say:" The Lord has risen and I have seen him!