

CHRIST IS RISEN

The Gospel reading we just heard was about Mary Magdalene and the other Mary going up to the tomb where Jesus was buried.

But I think they got a little bit more than what they expected.

Yes, they followed Jesus, they knew his teachings. He did say something about the temple being destroyed and rebuilt in three days – but they didn't know what he was talking about – they thought he could have been the Messiah – the Christ. But now, in their opinion, everything came tumbling down a couple days ago when he was hung from that cross.

Their lives had been turned upside down.

They were going to the tomb – maybe to pray outside of it, maybe to plant a flower in front of it – and maybe, just maybe, somewhere hidden deep inside of them was a little glimmer of hope – hope that something wonderful would happen.

And it did.

As they were approaching the tomb, the Gospel tells us that there was a great earthquake and an angel of God came and pushed back the stone blocking the tomb.

What is really neat about this part is that there were a couple of guards outside of the tomb. They were ordered to seal the rock and stand guard to make sure nobody took Jesus' body.

So here they were standing guard and an angel from heaven pushed the stone back. I bet that would be a hard one to explain to your boss.

So the angel said to the ladies – take a look – Jesus isn't here.

The first thing that probably went through their minds was, "Well, where is he??" He is dead, placed in a sealed tomb with guards standing out front – where could he go?

But before they could ask, the angel said to them, "He is Risen."

Then the reading tells us they left with fear and great joy.

Fear and great joy.

Those are two interesting emotions to have at the same time. Obviously great joy – because an angel just told you that the one you have come to know and love – Jesus – has risen from the dead and he will meet up with you in a town down the road.

But the Bible tells us that they also had fear. But it doesn't tell us what they were afraid of.

I guess there are several things they could have been afraid of. The guards that were standing right there – maybe they would have tried to do something to stop them from leaving.

Maybe the other Disciples would think they were crazy coming back with a story like that.

But what I truly believe is that they were afraid of what would happen next. The unknown.

What does this mean that He is Risen? What does it mean that he will meet us in Galilee? What will happen next? They were probably also thinking that they have lost him once, if he is really back, is there a chance they will they lose him again?

I think we all fear the unknown from time to time. Not knowing what life will bring us next can be scary for many people.

Maybe it is death that scares us. 11 years ago this June I lost my mother. Two months later, my grandmother died. Then a couple of months after that, my aunt died. I was scared – I asked myself, “Who’s next?”

Maybe it is a new job that scares us – or losing a job – or retiring. What happens next?

The unknown is scary for many people. Sometimes we feel like we’re in it by ourselves, or maybe with one or two other loved ones.

But we’re not.

Just like Jesus met the two Mary’s on the road as they were running back to town, Jesus is standing in the middle of our road of life – waiting for us. Waiting for us to see him so he can say “Greetings!” to us.

Because of Jesus' resurrection, we are never alone.

The Good News of the Bible is that God loves us so much – that he gave his son, Jesus to die for us while we were yet still sinners.

Because of this – it shows God's love for each of us and shows us how much we matter to him. He wants to meet us on that road of life and be in our lives.

The message of Easter isn't one of mourning for the death of Jesus - but a celebration of the resurrection and the Good News that it brings to all of us.

Christ is risen, he is risen indeed!

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