

John 20: 11-18

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.

As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;

and she saw two angels in white,

sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying,

one at the head and the other at the feet.

They said to her:

‘Woman, why are you weeping?’

She said to them,

“They have taken away my Lord,

and I do not know where they have laid him.”

When She had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there,

but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her:

“Woman, why are you weeping?

For whom are you looking?”

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him:

“Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him,

and I will take him away.”

Jesus said to her:

“Mary!”

She turned and said to him in Hebrew:

“Rabbouni! (which means teacher).

Jesus said to her,

Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father.

but go to my brothers and say to them:

‘I am ascending to my Father and to your Father,

to my God and your God.’

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples:

“I have seen the Lord!”

and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Meditation

I would like to begin by taking a few moments of silence...

Please, if you would take a couple of deep breaths and look around...

what do you see?

bare tree branches? some clouds? occasional peek of blue sky?

friends, family, strangers standing next to you and around you?

your breath in this cold morning air?

Silence...

Now...please listen to all the sounds you can hear...a car here and there...

a bird call? Someone else's breath? your own teeth shivering??

Silence....

and finally...please feel the cold brisk air on your cheek.

Can you feel your body shivering?

Is your nose cold? your fingers? your legs?

Silence...

This morning is not what we expect for an Easter Sunday morning!

29 degrees! go figure?

In my mind's eye on an Easter Sunday morning,

and I dare say, on most Easter cards....

I see a slight green tinge on the trees with the budding of new spring leaves...

a soft, warm and gentle breeze...

blue flowers and yellow daffodils...

birds flitting here and there...

bunnies hopping hither and yon...

I don't see any of that this morning...do you???

This weather is not what I had wanted for sure...

**and ... even though the weather forecast for the last two weeks told me
it was going to cold...**

I kept hoping for what wasn't going to be.

So if we find it hard to deal with our cold reality of this morning...

How much worse it was for the followers of Jesus so long ago!

They most certainly did not want his life to end like that!

**They had him, in their mind's eye, pegged as the Messiah
the one who would set their people free**

**In their mind's eye, Yahweh would rule the land once again
through a Jewish King...**

**They would be free to worship as they wished,
they would be released of all the heavy burdens of
taxation and slavery.**

**Before any of them came back to the tomb that morning...
their hearts were deep in grief,**

**And so on the first day of the week,
there is Mary Magdelene at his tomb weeping...**

but she sees that his body is not there!

Two angels in white greet her and ask her why she is weeping....

**"They have taken away my Lord,
and I do not know where they have laid him."**

At this moment...she turns and sees a man she presumes to be the gardener

who asks her the same question:

“Woman, why are you weeping?

For whom are you looking?”

But this time she has a request:

“Sir, if you have carried him away,

tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”

The one she has presumed to be the gardener is really

Jesus and she is talking face to face but she does not recognize him...

She hears his question, but does not yet recognize his voice either...

And then he says to her: “Mary”

And in a flash of instant recognition she calls out:

“Rabbouni!

Rabbouni!

Rabbouni is a term of endearment.

It does mean ‘teacher’ or ‘rabbi’...

But it is used for someone who is respected and much loved ...

Finally she recognizes that it is the one whom she loves....

How is it, I have wondered, that she

one of Jesus’ closest friends and followers

did not recognize him when she saw him?

How did she not recognize his voice?

It can only be that he did not look or sound

like he did before his death.

Whatever she saw and heard

on that early Sunday morning

did not reveal that it was he whom she loved until she heard him call her name:

Mary.

Can you feel his tenderness?

Can you imagine her shock? her relief? her joy?

Mary.

Whatever happened in the tomb that morning will forever

remain a mystery to us,

simply because there are no eye witnesses to the actual event...

But what we do have this morning is the remembering

of an encounter between two people who had loved and respected each other in a very

special way...

Yes! the Resurrection of Jesus remains one of our greatest mysteries and one of our greatest gifts!

His Resurrection reveals to us that Life...

in some magnificent, mysterious way continues on after death....

Because his Life was lived in, through and for Love...

we now know that Life is transformed in and through Love,

Scripture tell us that God is LOVE ...

not that God loves, but God IS Love,

so it is in all our thoughts of Love,
in all our words of love,
in all our actions of love
in easy and in the most difficult of times...
is where God can be found...

Love so much more than a feeling
expressed on a store bought card....

Love CREATES more than what existed before like this whole
magnificent and mysterious cosmos that we live in...

Love multiplies: like loaves and fishes...

Love connects: like a man walking on water with men
sitting fearfully in rocking boats...

Love heals lepers and bleeding women and blind men
and lonely widows...

Love is so large that it includes our family and our enemy...

Love is what makes the world go round...

Love is what began the beginning...

Love is.

God is.

God is Love.

Yet because Love can never commanded or legislated
we do not always heed the call of Love.

We become so distraught that we become blind and deaf
and cannot always see nor hear the Holy One ...

**Many of us, this day, are weeping for the state of our world...
We are weeping for the destruction of Mother Earth...
We are weeping because we have been betrayed and we hurt...
We are weeping for the violence that is killing all the children...**

and yet..

and yet Love is here...

right here, right now calling out your and my name...

Let us Listen not with our ears...but with our heart....

**Let us let go of our expectations of what we think should happen
so that we may feel what is:**

Love... calling our name... felt deeply in our hearts...

**Sure...this cold weather is not what we wanted or expected...
his death was never wanted or expected either...**

**but either way, the sun is shining, birds are singing,
flowers are popping... He has been risen**

Love is rising once again!

Amen! Alleluia! Amen!