

April 20, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

HE SAW AND BELIEVED

By Sr. Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

Today's Gospel

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

JOHN 20:1-9

Reflection

These nine verses above do not describe the resurrection of Jesus – they tell us the events that the disciples experienced at dawn on the first day of the week, on Sunday, after the crucifixion of Jesus. Mary of Magdala, possibly with other women, came to the tomb and saw the stone rolled back, which indicated to them that someone had removed the body of the Lord. They did not peer into the tomb. In sorrow and fear, they ran to tell Peter and the “other disciple whom Jesus loved” what they feared had happened. Immediately, Peter and the Beloved Disciple ran to see the tomb. The Evangelist tells us that the disciples *did not yet understand that Jesus would rise from the dead*. When the two disciples arrived, they went inside the tomb and saw the burial cloths lying there... this told them that the body of the Lord had not been stolen.... So, what happened...? The Beloved Disciple **saw and believed**.

In this moment of sorrow and loss and confusion, the disciple whom Jesus loved **believed**! What happened to him at this breathtaking moment? Did he remember the times when Jesus gently healed the sick or embraced the brokenhearted, or when he saw Jesus transfigured on the mountaintop, or when Jesus intimately shared his heart with the disciples at the Last Supper...? Was this the grace that was given to the Beloved Disciple as he stood in the cold, empty tomb where Jesus had been buried? The Gospel is clear: the Beloved Disciple saw and believed!



Resurrection
Image by Romolo Tavani

For Pondering

Consider with me: Mary of Magdala was also a Beloved Disciple of Jesus. She had come in the darkness to mourn near the tomb of Jesus after the long night of suffering and great loss. She thought that someone had taken away the body of the Lord. Imagine her longing to find him. In the following verses (11-16), Mary encounters Jesus, hearing his voice calling her name. With that familiar voice, everything changes! Her Beloved is alive, risen from the grave! Imagine her joy and astonishment as she reaches out to touch him!

We too are Beloved Disciples. We yearn to meet our Risen Lord. We believe he is risen, and we encounter him in the love we share with him and others on this glorious mourning. We meet him in the suffering and wounded who are beaten down at the hands of others. We meet him in the face of a child and in the elder woman or man making their way slowly down the path.

For Prayer

*As Beloved Disciples, we see, and we believe.
We remember how Jesus Christ, risen from the grave,
loves us and wants to heal us.
If our faith in you, Jesus, is weak,
heal that part of us that is longing to be healed.
Make us whole again!*

Jesus, how do you want to meet me today on this glorious Easter Morning?

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