

**Easter Sunday**...John 20:1-18 (full text) April 12, 2020

During Lent we focused on three words: Awareness, Choice and Transformation.

Around the beginning of Lent I suggested to meditate on a Gospel story and place yourself in that scene. The idea was to assist in developing a personal relationship with Jesus. A personal relationship with Jesus can bring insight, understanding, self-awareness, which of course, leads to transformation. See how it unfolds in Mary's life.

Place yourself in today's Gospel story. Go with Mary Magdalene to the tomb. It is still dark. She is confused, bewildered and questioning. How could all this happen? Her heart was heavy. She couldn't think. It was difficult to take in all that happened on Friday. Her entire person was surrounded in darkness. Dark as the early part of the morning of the first day of the week.

When she arrived at the tomb she saw that the stone had been removed. What to do? She knew what to do. She ran back and contacted Peter and John and told them: "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have laid him."

Peter and the other disciple set out, went to the tomb and verified that the body of Jesus was not there. Then the two disciples returned to their homes. For as yet, they had not understood the scriptures.

Mary Magdalene decided to stay. Mary had a deep sense or feeling about this whole experience. There's got to be more to it than an empty tomb. There's got to be a reason for all this. There's more here than meets the eye. Mary is weeping. She is showing that she has some deep feelings around this event, feelings that Peter and John didn't have or didn't show. They turned around and went back to their homes.

Her weeping was probably prompted by her recall of Jesus carrying of the cross and the crucifixion. She was probably present when Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus down from the cross. And when they put him in the tomb before sundown on Friday they were unable to prepare Jesus's body with the traditional ointments.

For Mary, the questions kept surfacing. Where is the body? How come the facial shroud is all rolled up in one place and the body shroud folded in another place, as we are told in another Gospel? Questions. Questions, Too many unanswered questions.

So Mary took a chance. As she wept she bent over to look into the tomb. 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.

There must have been a lot of things going on in her mind, her heart and her feelings. What is this all about? And then the Angels asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

Why am I weeping?

What a question to ask at a time like this. I'm feeling pain, confusion and have unresolved questions. And I'm having these flash-back scenes of Friday: Jesus on trial before Pilate; the crown of thorns on his head; the crowd yelling "crucify him", "crucify him"; seeing Jesus carry the cross; hearing the hammering of the nails in his hands; hearing him have difficulty breathing and hearing Jesus's last words. And I'm being asked: Why am I weeping?

Mary has enough presence of mind to say to the Angels: "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." The Angels said nothing.

Mary had a feeling that someone was near her. So she turned and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew "Rabbouni" which means teacher.

What a wild emotional roller coaster ride she was on up to now. All the questions were resolved in the presence of the person of Jesus. It all came together. He is alive.

Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me...but go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Mary Magdalene ventured out in the dark to go to the tomb. Her search involved a lot of feelings; a lot of questions. She searched for an explanation; an answer to the questions; a resolution to her feelings. Her persistence paid off. Her questions led her to the answers. Her determination led her to the risen Jesus who is the light of the world. She was overjoyed when she met Jesus. Jesus was alive.

By this time the sun was shining; the darkness left her. Even nature has an influence on our transformation.

On meeting Jesus something happened within Mary Magdalene. Her spirit was full of joy. Her spirit was transformed from the darkness of death to new life.

Experience transformation for yourself with new life in Christ.

Christ is risen. Alleluia. Alleluia

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