



Holy Saturday and Easter Reflection 2019
Schoenstatt Women's Professional League

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again."

(Luke 24:5-7)

After the death of Christ, it would have been important for His followers not to draw attention to themselves, and so in the very early morning hours, Mary Magdalene and a few others go to embalm Christ's body. It had been now two days since Christ had died, the morning after the Sabbath, and all was quiet. Still surrounded by their grief and shock, the group reaches the tomb, but Mary Magdalene sees the stone is moved and the body of Christ is missing. She panics and asks while weeping, "Where have they taken my Lord?" The depths of her despair are apparent.

The words of the Angel must have been a strange comfort for this group – Christ did promise them that He would rise again from the dead, but after seeing Him scourged and killed, can they believe that He meant this literally? After all, the only man that had ever come back to life was Lazarus, and that was by Christ's own power. How would Jesus himself rise from the dead?

But then, Christ appears to Mary Magdalene! He is alive! He is risen! That for which He came to earth, to set us free from the bonds of Adam's sin, has been accomplished. In this final act of Love, Christ does not remain in Heaven after His suffering. He returns to His human body to continue to teach the Church, to ensure her of His Love, and to guide her to the path that we have been on ever since.

What can we take from these events? The Resurrection is the greatest of the Church's feast days, the celebration of the triumph of the Goodness of God over the evil that stalks mankind. The Crucifixion was the ultimate sacrifice, and the Resurrection is the fulfillment of this act of Love. The Resurrection is the epitome of Christian hope and joy. Christ's disciples had been left in great despair – everything they had worked for, the man they had followed and loved was gone. They had no direction, no understanding. And yet they continued to believe and to stay together, and that faith in Christ is rewarded with the return of their Lord. In the greatest moment of despair, when the world seems to have overcome them entirely, Christ comes to them, and there is only joy, and hope for

the future.

In our lives we can be overcome with despair, stressed by our burdens and responsibilities. But our life in the Church is the life of the Resurrection – everything Christ taught is encapsulated and fulfilled on this day! The Resurrection spirit must accompany us everywhere, when we do the unpleasant tasks which are required of us – such as the group who went to renew their sorrow in embalming the body of Christ; when we sense that all is lost – such as when they discover Christ is missing; and most importantly, when we experience joy and hope – as when Mary Magdalene sees Christ again. The Resurrection’s triumph over sin and death should inspire in us a great desire for joy at all times. Joy can be both passive and active; we can feel joyful (passive) or we can actively seek joy, prolong joy, and discover joy in the little details of life. This joy is our hope, it is a foreshadowing of the joy we will experience in Heaven, when we will join the Risen Christ and rejoice in His victory over death.

For Reflection:

- **How can I unite myself with the spiritual joy and hope of Easter through the Church?**
- **How do I celebrate Easter? Only once a year on the day or through the Octave of Easter? Every Sunday?**
- **How can I cultivate a “Resurrection Spirit” in my life? How can I cultivate joy?**
- **How can I cultivate hope in God – both in the temporal sense, and as a spiritual reality for the future of my life?**
- **How can I bring to and cultivate joy and hope to others?**
- **Are joy and hope firm aspects of my relationship with God and with the Blessed Mother? If not, how could these two gifts of the Holy Spirit enhance my spiritual life, and my connection with Divine Providence throughout the day?**