

## **One**

### **The Burial**

On the evening of Good Friday, Joseph of Arimathaea asked the Governor, Pontius Pilate for permission to take Jesus down from the Cross and bury him properly. Pilate granted the request. So, Joseph took the body of Jesus, cleansed and anointed it, wrapped it in a clean shroud, and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. Now Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joseph stayed there, sitting opposite the tomb. (Mt 27:61)

What strikes me is that Mary Magdalene remains at the Tomb.

How long did she remain? Only God knows. But it was a long time. At some point, she left. But she was drawn back, early Sunday morning.

Gregory the Great writes, “When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and did not find the Lord’s body, she thought it had been taken away and so informed the disciples. After they came and saw the tomb...the disciples went back home, but Mary wept and remained standing outside the tomb. We should reflect on Mary’s attitude and the great love she felt for Christ; for though the disciples had left the tomb, she remained. She was still seeking the one she had not found, and while she sought she wept; burning with the fire of love, she longed for him who she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to seek Christ was the only one to see him...”

## **Two**

Okay, it’s Easter, I want to experience the Risen Christ!

Peter ran to the Tomb and went away unbelieving because he did not remain. He did not watch and pray as Magdalene did. Jesus later reprimands the Apostles in the Upper Room for their unbelief. But it was also Peter and the Apostles who would not watch and pray in the Garden of Gethsemane so they forsook Jesus and fled at the moment of the arrest. We must learn the lesson of Magdalene. Those who learn to remain in prayer will eventually experience the Risen Christ!

We began Lent at Ash Wednesday suggesting that if you wanted a better friendship with Christ, the Rosary was a good place to begin – but not just occasionally – make it part of your daily routine. If you do that, then consider spending a little more time in prayer by reading something from Scripture, or the Saints, or the Church. Reflect or think about what struck you. Apply that truth to your life by asking: Am I living this or not? Then form a resolution, to choose something practical and concrete to do that day based on your meditation.

Teresa of Avila tells us to continue mental prayer until we lose the desire to read and acquire more knowledge (Life 14). Then we should just be with God in calm, quiet, and stillness. (Life 12:2,5)

John of the Cross describes this as, “An inclination to remain alone and in quietude...If those in whom this occurs, know how to remain quiet they will soon - in that unconcern and idleness -delicately experience the interior nourishment.”

So, if you persevered for some time now in mental prayer but you find that you have lost the desire to say a whole lot or read a whole lot or even try to figure things out. If you have a growing desire to just be with Jesus and Mary without talking, reading, and figuring things out, then do that. Simply remain alone with God in silence. Learn the lesson of Magdalene – Remain!

## **Three**

Those who learn to remain in prayer will eventually experience the Risen Christ! However, it probably will not be immediately. Why does God make us wait?

St. Gregory explains, “When our desires are not satisfied, they grow stronger, and becoming stronger they take hold of their object. Holy desires likewise grow with anticipation...” “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?” She is asked why she is sorrowing so that her desire might be strengthened; for when she mentions whom she is seeking, her love is kindled all the more ardently.”

Why does God seem to hide himself and make us wait? Because God can only give himself to us in proportion to our desire. Therefore, God makes us persevere in seeking him to increase our desire so that we receive more of Him.

When Mary poured the expensive ointment on Jesus on Wednesday, we learned from her to love Jesus extravagantly with our most precious commodity, our time. Give him time in prayer. Then she teaches us to remain in prayer as she remained at the Tomb today.

Persevere in prayer and your desire will grow and Jesus will fill you with himself and your joy will be full.

## **Four**

### **Apostle to France**

In 42 AD, King Herod began to violently persecute the Christians in Jerusalem. He put the Apostle James the Greater to death. Then he

arrested Peter and put him in prison. However, angels set him free and he fled the country, probably to Rome.

It was then that Herod arrested some of Jesus' closest friends: Magdalene, Martha, Lazarus, Maximin, and others.

They were placed in a boat with no sail, oars, or rudder and cast off into the sea so that they would die a horrible death of starvation. Their boat finally landed near Marseille, France. They immediately began to share with everyone the Good News of the Resurrection of Jesus and they firmly established the Catholic Faith in France. Later Magdalene retreated to a life of prayer and solitude in a grotto halfway up the mountain of Saint Baume to be perpetually alone with Jesus. Tradition has it that she lived on nothing but the Eucharist for many years.

In 415 AD, St. John Cassian went to Marseille, France and was shown the tombs of Mary Magdalene, Martha and it was well known at that time that Lazarus was considered one of the founders of the Church there.

## **Five**

### **Third Day of the Novena to Divine Mercy**

Jesus said to St. Faustina, "Today bring to Me all devout and faithful souls, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. These souls brought Me consolation on the Way of the Cross. They were that drop of consolation in the midst of an ocean of bitterness."

Most Merciful Jesus, from the treasury of Your mercy You impart Your graces in great abundance to each and all. Receive us into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart and never let us escape from it. We

beg this of You by that most wondrous love for the heavenly Father with which Your Heart burns so fiercely.

The miracles of mercy are impenetrable. Neither the sinner nor just one will fathom them. When You cast upon us an eye of pity, You draw us all closer to Your love.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon faithful souls, as upon the inheritance of your Son. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, grant them Your blessing and surround them with Your constant protection. Thus may they never fail in love or lose the treasure of the holy faith, but rather, with all the hosts of Angels and Saints, may they glorify your boundless mercy for endless ages. Amen.

### **Divine Mercy Chaplet**

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.  
Amen.”

### **Our Father**

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.”

### **Hail Mary**

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”

On the Our Father beads pray:

“Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.”

On the Hail Mary beads, you will pray:

“For the sake of His sorrowful Passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.”

In conclusion, three times you will recite these words:

“Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”