

Monday's Gospel: Love Overcomes Fear

Gospel for Monday in the 1st
Week of Easter. and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mt* 28:8-15)

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Hail!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed; and this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

Commentary

On this Easter Monday, like Mary Magdalene and the other Mary when they saw the empty tomb and heard the news from the angel, our heart continues to overflow with joy for

Jesus' resurrection. The two women were frightened, but not paralyzed, eager to obey the angel's command to announce the good news of the resurrection to the disciples. Their joy was greater than their fear, because of their unconditional love for the Master. And they were quickly rewarded: the Risen Jesus himself comes to meet them. Those women filled with faith, joyful and obedient, received a greeting from Jesus himself that filled their heart with peace. The angel had just told them: "do not be afraid." But they were still afraid. So they received the same announcement for the second time, but this time from the lips of Jesus himself. And their great love leads them to embrace his feet: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 Jn 4:18).

The guards at the tomb, who had been left as dead, got up and went to tell the chief priests what had

happened. There was no joy in their announcement, only fear. Calm returned to their hearts only when they received money in exchange for not saying anything about it to anyone. What would have been the final outcome of those soldiers, who were silenced by bribery but who had witnessed the Truth?

Today we see the same two reactions: faith in the Risen Jesus with boldness in announcing him, or the silence due to greed, “the root of all evil” (cf. *1 Tim* 6:10). In the soldiers we see Jesus’ words in the parable of the sower fulfilled: “As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” (*Mt* 13:22). In the women, in contrast, we see the opposite: “As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in

one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty” (*Mt* 13:23). We ask another Mary, the Mother of the Risen Lord, for the faith and daring of those two women, to “proclaim the marvelous works of the Lord” (cf. *Ps* 118:17).

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