



Balta Lelija

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“Jesus appears Mary of Magdala”

Jn 20:11-18

But Mary was standing outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, as she wept, she stooped to look inside, and saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet. They said, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' 'They have taken my Lord away,' she replied, 'and I don't know where they have put him.' As she said this she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and remove him.' Jesus said, 'Mary!' She turned round then and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbuni!' - which means Master. Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to the brothers, and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' So Mary of Magdala told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and that he had said these things to her.

We encounter the faithfulness of a woman who loves the Lord! To her general mourning for Jesus is added the pain of no longer finding him in the tomb, and her heart pours out in tears.

Why are you weeping, woman? The angels - knowing of the resurrection of the Lord - are already preparing Mary to see the Lord. When she turns around, the Lord is standing behind her. But she cannot recognise him!

Why can't she recognise him right away? Obviously, the resurrection body is not recognisable to her in the same way as the physical body of the Lord during His time on earth.

But the Lord knows the way in which she can recognise him. He calls her name! And a loving soul, like Mary of Magdala, recognises the voice of the Lord. She is familiar with it, and we remember the word of the Lord: “*The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.*” (Jn 10:27).

It is essential for our journey of discipleship that we become familiar with the voice of the Lord and know how to distinguish it well from other voices.

The ongoing inner conversation with the Lord, which leads to a heart relationship, makes the love and intimacy with Jesus grow. The reception of his word in the Holy Scriptures and the internalisation of the word give us a “spiritual taste”, we taste the word, it gets its distinctive character, which is different from other words. It is similar with the true teaching of the Church - it too has a certain spiritual flavour, which comes from the truth, and which one is well able to distinguish from other pronouncements.

Jesus speaks to us in many ways, but these three ways mentioned are always open - in them the Lord is constantly speaking to us:

- a) through inner conversation
- b) through the word of the Holy Scriptures
- c) through the teaching of the Church

Mary recognised his voice through her inner intimacy with him: he only needed to say her name.

And then she receives a mission: she becomes - according to the biblical account - the first witness and messenger of the resurrection. What comforting news after the horrors of the Lord's capture and death, after the disorientation of the disciples and the grief of those who loved him: *“I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” (Jn 20:17b).*

These words not only burned in the hearts of the Christians of that time, they still burn today and give great comfort. The Risen One, who then soon returns to the Father, prepares the dwellings for His own. His God - the loving Father of all people and angels - is also the God of each and every one of us. We are not just people who live somewhere on this earth, no, we are infinitely loved in time and in eternity.

All that the Lord has said has come true, and all that is yet to come will come true! God's words do not deceive! Just as it has come true that the Lord has risen, so it is also true that He will come again at the end of time (*cf. Rev 1:7*).

In the meantime let us be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, that the world may believe (*cf. Jn 17:21*).