

18. April 2022

## The joy of the resurrection and the shadows of darkness

Mt 28:8-15

*Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. And suddenly, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings,' he said. And the women came up to him and, clasping his feet, they did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; there they will see me.' Now while they were on their way, some of the guards went off into the city to tell the chief priests all that had happened. These held a meeting with the elders and, after some discussion, handed a considerable sum of money to the soldiers with these instructions, 'This is what you must say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep." And should the governor come to hear of this, we undertake to put things right with him ourselves and to see that you do not get into trouble.' So they took the money and carried out their instructions, and to this day that is the story among the Jews.*

The great joy of the Lord's resurrection was interspersed with fear among the women. A feeling of awe, which is not so much fear, but the deep involvement in this incredible event that they were witnessing. Even if they had heard about the prediction of Jesus that he would rise from the dead through the disciples, when it happened it must have been overwhelming!

The supernatural world of God must first sink into our lives before it becomes more natural to us, before we can feel at home in it. We are too far away from it! Therefore, the first word at the encounter of the Risen Lord with the women is: Do not be afraid! The new reality of the resurrection should become familiar to them. Jesus is the same one they knew, although now in a transfigured form.

The biblical texts not infrequently have the peculiarity of letting the bright light of God shine and at the same time naming the darkness, which then stands out all the more clearly.

This is also the case in today's text.

The described darkness of the chief priests and the elders can hardly be surpassed. They fundamentally deny the supernatural event and use the means of lies and corruption to

obscure this testimony. There is no pause, no fright, no rethinking, no fear of God! One must fear here even a proximity to the sin against the Holy Spirit! It is that sin which acts against the recognized truth and in the worst case persists in this attitude until death!

In today's reading it is a sin with enormous effect, because it is tried to prevent that the Jews would get knowledge of the resurrection of the Lord and would perhaps convert because of this event. In addition, there is the deliberate sowing of distrust against the disciples and thus the weakening of their testimony. Who knows how strongly this sin has affected the history of salvation, and has affected the conversion of the Jews to Jesus up to this day! God alone knows!

Also the corruption of the soldiers, who entered into this sin by their venality (they got a lot of money), is frightening! The darkness has become more and more dense and it tries to destroy the testimony of God with all its might!

But God also knows how to make use of all the adverse circumstances.

After the Jews as a people have not accepted the Messiah, the Lord lets the message of the resurrection of Christ be proclaimed in other nations.

While God continues to wait for His people to recognize the Lord He sent to them, God gathers His own from all nations. The message of the resurrection penetrates the world and gives hope to the people! Hope that after all the suffering and the apparent victory of evil, God has the last word and that man is destined to live.

Therefore, the call of the Lord's resurrection will go on and on. He prepares for us the dwellings in eternity! Death is conquered and we will be with God in eternity.

All this is the great gift of Easter, and that is why we may become people who live in the Easter joy and who, while performing the assigned tasks on this earth, already live in faith towards our future.