



Balta Lelija

11. April 2023

Tuesday of the Easter Octave
Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene

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.

Today we meet the faithfulness of a woman who loves the Lord. To the mourning for the death of Jesus is added the pain of not finding His body in the tomb. Mary's heart bursts into tears!

"*Woman, why are you weeping?*" With this question, the angels prepare Mary to see the Lord. As soon as she turns around, He was there. But she could not recognise Him, so why did she not recognise Him immediately? Obviously the body of the Risen One is not recognisable to her at first glance, compared to the physical appearance of Jesus during His earthly life.

But the Lord knows how to make Mary Magdalene recognise Him: He pronounces her name, and a soul in love like Mary recognises the voice of her Lord! His voice is familiar to her... In this context, those words of Jesus come to mind: "*The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me*" (Jn 10:27).

For our way of following the Lord, it is essential that we become familiar with His voice and that we know how to distinguish it from other voices that do not come from Him.

The constant interior dialogue with the Lord, which leads to a heart-to-heart relationship, allows love and familiarity with Him to grow. The acceptance and interiorisation of His Word in Sacred Scripture gives us a "sense of spiritual taste", so to speak, so that we taste the Word and identify its uniqueness in relation to other words. Something similar happens with the authentic doctrine of the Church, which also has a certain "spiritual flavour", coming from the truth, and which is clearly distinguishable from other pronouncements.

Jesus can speak to us in many ways, but the three aspects mentioned above are the means by which He constantly speaks to us: 1) in inner dialogue with Him; 2) through the words of Scripture; 3) through the doctrine of the Church.

Mary recognised His voice because she was familiar with it; all He had to do was to say her name! And then she receives a mission and becomes, according to the biblical testimony, the first messenger and witness of the Resurrection. After the shock of Jesus' arrest and death, after the disciples' disorientation and the mourning of those who loved Him, comes the consoling news: *"I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God"*.

These words did not only burn in the hearts of the Christians of that time; they continue to burn and give comfort today. The Risen One, who will soon return to the Father, prepares the dwelling places for His own. His God, the loving Father of all men and angels, is also the God of each one of us. We are not simply human beings who are somewhere on the face of the earth and who must be content to survive and pass the time somehow... We are infinitely loved persons, in time and in eternity!

Everything the Lord said has come true, and what is yet to be fulfilled will come true. God's words do not lie! Just as His Resurrection was fulfilled, as He foretold to His disciples, so will His glorious Coming be fulfilled at the End of time.

In the meantime, let us be witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, so that the world may believe.