

- I. We all know the theological importance of Easter: The Lord rose with His whole body, showing that He was God. He was not simply Jesus, a great prophet, but the one Being in the universe who completely transcends all limits. He was both God and Human, Divinely Human, in fact
 - A. How does this affect you today? Does it make a difference in your life?
 - B. The deeper meaning of the Easter story shows how the Lord can rise in our lives now, just as He did almost 2000 years ago.
- II. How do you think the time between His crucifixion and resurrection went for the disciples? for Mary Magdalene, for Mary the sister of Martha & Lazarus?
 - A. Think of the pain that someone they loved had died
 - B. They must have wondered what their purpose was now that their mentor and teacher was gone
 - C. They may have felt foolish for having followed Him, each probably cherishing dreams that He would do something great in an external way
- III. When Mary Magdalene & the other Mary came to anoint body on Sunday morning, they came with heavy hearts
 - A. They would have had no hope left, but at least they could show respect and love for their leader
 - B. But the dawn rising was a symbol of hope and rebirth
- IV. Let's look at this story in the context of our lives
 - A. The disciples had been following the Lord, casting out demons, teaching and a great many good things, and it all seemed to fall apart
 1. Has that happened to you? There are times when we are trying to do what is right, yet feel no joy, feel no sense of clear guidance. The Lord seems absent, and what used to be easy now seems hard
 2. Maybe spiritual teachings you grew up with seem harder to accept
 3. But more likely, you find yourself struggling to keep living an honorable life in areas, you feel yourself failing and wonder why the Lord does not strengthen you as it seemed He did before
 - B. Whatever it is, the Lord seems absent, like He is in a tomb with a stone rolled over it. Instead of a loving God, we see rules with no obvious love, symbolized by the stone, and the coldness of death
 1. That is like seeing the literal teachings in the Word without at the same time seeing the spirit within them that shows their love and beauty
- V. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went anyway, to show respect
 - A. When we go to the Lord and to His Word we when don't feel His presence, when it doesn't *feel* meaningful, Lord can bring about a change.
 1. In fact in is exactly because we do it *despite* what we feel that the change takes place
 - B. An earthquake occurs that shakes the foundations of what we believe & think
 - C. An angel rolled back the stone, & sat on it, with clothes gleaming white, a face like lightning

1. Shining clothes and face were as if lit by an inner fire
 2. The stone rolled away depicts that inner fire, the inner meaning of Word, which is the Lord's presence that gives meaning to all our lives
- D. Those women didn't need to go to the sepulcher. Their teacher was dead
1. But they did, and their going made a change happen
 2. It is when we turn to Lord when He seems least present, that He does the work
 - a. People say that they feel too bad to pray, or too unworthy, or too busy. But that's the best time
 - b. When you are tired and empty is a great time to read the Word
 - c. When you feel the most angry, yet ask what the Lord would have you do, that is the time that earthquakes take place
- VI. When the guards saw the angel, they were afraid, as were the women
- A. This is called holy fear in the Word, a good thing
1. We are told, "The holy tremor that seizes upon, agitates and convulses the inner parts of the head, when the Divine flows in and fills them is called 'fear' ..." This "disturbance" can come from "the inflow of things which cause amazement, connected also with joy." AE 677:8
 2. When someone finds the love of their life, they sometimes have this feeling, a fear that the most precious love they have felt will be hurt. We can feel the same for children at times
 3. The Lord shows us ways of living and being that make us afraid, afraid that we will hurt something precious
- B. This fear comes because "life enters from the Lord in place of one's own life. A person's own life is to look from himself to the Lord, but life from the Lord is to look from the Lord to the Lord, and yet as if from himself" AR 56
1. The Lord offers us possibilities that are so far beyond what we experience, but they involve letting His life lead, and that is frightening, as if we will die
 2. Part of us feels that it might drop down dead as the guards did
 3. And this is true in part. Something will die.
- VII. But the Lord talks to us and calms us, allows us to receive His joy
- A. The angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him."
- VIII. He says three things: Do not be afraid, the Lord is risen, & go to Galilee
- A. "Do not be afraid for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified."
1. Do not be afraid because if you love what is good, good things will happen. The name Jesus is used when the focus of the story is love.
- B. The Lord not dead, but risen
1. Even though your life feels empty and dry, the Lord is within you. The teachings of the Word you are trying to live are acting with power in your

life

2. Just as the women needed to see the Lord as God, rather than simply as Jesus of Nazareth, we need to see the Lord's teaching as Divinely powerful. Not just good ideas, but the only ideas, the only source of happiness. It can do the impossible
3. It is the source of all life, the kind of truth that transforms us when we commit to it absolutely.

C. Then the angels tells them to go to Galilee

1. Galilee represents the Gentile states in us and in others
2. Or another way of putting it, Galilee stands for natural ways in us that are not really converted to doing things the Lord's way. They are not bad, but not yet focused on a spiritual way of being
3. And Galilee also stands for other people who are good, but have not had benefit of the truth we may have
4. The Lord is saying, "Here's the truth, now go and do. Change your life, and make a difference in the lives of those around you. It is in using the truth that you will see Me"

IX. Angels are symbols for the Lord's truth.

- A. The Lord always comes to us in His truth first, and tells us to obey.
- B. But when we begin to obey, the love shows itself within that truth
- C. As women are going to tell the disciples, Lord Himself appears to them
 1. And they fall at His feet and worship Him
 2. You can imagine the incredible power in their experience of seeing the Lord, the Lord who they knew was dead, but who was miraculously now alive

X. What a difference between this sight and the one of the angel!

- A. This is God directly. Not principles of truth, but a visible, comprehensible, yet infinite and all-powerful God, both Divine and Human united
- B. Now we desire to do the truth because we feel God's presence within it
 1. When we feel joy, now we feel the Lord's joy as His joy in us
 2. Before felt happy, but were unconscious of the source, now we realize it is our Lord in us, and that increases our joy immensely

XI. Then the Lord *also* tells them to go tell disciples to go to Galilee

- A. Again, go and act, be a good person, particularly applying the truth to parts of your life that you are not doing so right now, and helping those who don't have the truth that you do

XII. Every gospel ends with the Lord telling people to spread His church to people who lacked it

- A. An example from Matthew: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:19-20
- B. The Lord rises in our lives when we take the truth He has given us & work to bring His joy & peace to all nations – to the unconverted part of ourselves and

the good people all around us

- XIII. When we try to live the truth, the Lord seems dead for a time, but when we *persist* in going to His Word and trying to do what is right, He makes a miracle happen. He shows us His truth and He shows us the love within His truth, and He sends us out to help others with that truth.
 - A. We begin and end the story doing the same thing – doing what is right – but because of our persistence in turning to the Lord, we do in for different reasons
- XIV. Question: What can you do to bring joy of risen Lord into someone's life this week? What person, let's say outside of New Church, can you do something special for, can you serve as our God would serve? What person can you go to Galilee for?
 - A. Now how about within the church or within your family?
 - B. And what part of yourself needs the truth that you can apply?
- XV. Go to Galilee to apply the truth, and there you will see your risen Lord.

Matt 28:1-10 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshipped 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."

No one has the Lord present with himself, unless he knows His quality. The truths of the Word make this quality clear. As many truths as there are in the Word, there are just so many mirrors and ideas of the Lord; for He is the Word itself, and He is the Truth itself. Inv 41

It is known that faith from love is the essential means of salvation, and thus is the primary teaching of the church. But since it is important to know how a person can be in enlightenment as to learn the truths that make faith and in affection as to do the goods that must make up his love, and so can know whether his faith is a belief in truth and his love a love of good, this shall be told in its proper order, as follows: (1) Let him read the Word every day, one or two chapters, and learn from a teacher and from preachings the beliefs of his religion; and especially let him learn that God is one, and that the Lord is the God of heaven and earth, that the Word is holy, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death. (2) Let him learn from the Word, from a teacher, and from preachings, what actions are sins, and that they are especially adulteries, thefts, murders, false witness, and the others mentioned in the Ten Commandments. Similarly, that lustfulness and obscene thoughts are also adulteries, that frauds and illicit gains are also thefts, that hatred and revenge are also murders, and that lies and blasphemies are also false witness; and so on." AE 803:2