

Mary of Magdala.

‘On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb.’ (Jn 20:1)

Mary of Magdala walked, sometimes stumbling as the tears, which had been flowing since the terrible events of Friday, clouded her vision. On she went, past the city walls where the tombs of the honoured ancestors slept, stumbled blindly past them to where her beloved was buried. Maybe the aching emptiness inside her would be eased by washing his dead body, maybe the terrible memories of that afternoon would be eased by washing the wounds.

She arrived at the tomb and stood there staring in unbelief into the empty tomb. The stone had been rolled away! There was a vacant slab where the body of her beloved should be! Where was He? Where was her beloved? Her heart stood still, she could not breathe. Not only has the one she loved been brutally murdered, but now they have taken his body to subject it to who knows what indignities. She hadn't thought her pain could get any worse but now it seemed to tear her apart. The Jews had prevented her from taking care of his poor bruised body, from treating him with love and gentleness – even if it was after his death.

As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw what seemed to her to be two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?” Hardly able to speak through her tears she sobbed “They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him.”

Turning away from the tomb, the empty tomb, she saw a man who she supposed was the gardener. She cried out ‘Do you know where they have put my Lord?’



But then she hears a voice calling her name 'Mary'. She would recognise that voice anywhere. It was not just any voice, it was **HIS** voice. Her eyes were opened, she saw Him. She saw Jesus - and suddenly everything changed, her despair was changed to joy.

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The tomb is empty! Love is stronger than death! Forgiveness is deeper than sin! The truth of God is more powerful than the lies of the world! Evil does not have the last word! Christ is risen. And we are invited into the astonishing mystery of the Spirit of God.

*Risen Lord, we believe in you, inflame us with your love so that we will pass on the burning torch of your love to all those we meet. Amen*

