

REFLECTIONS

April 12, 2009

Jesus said to her, "Mary."

John 20:16

Called by Name¹

She had agreed to meet the other women early in the morning, so it was dark when she arose. Besides, the night had been long and unsettling—as unsettling as it was two days before when Jesus was crucified. No one could explain the darkness that fell at noon that day, or the earthquake at mid-afternoon, or the torn curtain in the temple. No one could explain why Jesus had to die, especially such a painful death. And no one could feel a deeper loss than Mary Magdalene felt as she hurried to join the others.

Darkness made them step cautiously as they made their way to the tomb. Along the way the women talked of the earth tremor in the night, but they were not prepared for what they found when they reached the tomb. The stone was rolled away, but the tomb was not empty. Angels were there. The body of Jesus was not.

“Why do you look for the living among the dead?” the angels said. “He is not here, he has risen!” Trembling and bewildered, the women hurried back and told the eleven what they had seen, but the disciples did not believe them. Even so, John left the others and ran to the tomb with Peter chasing behind him. John reached there first and stopped to look in, but Peter ran past him into the tomb. Jesus was not there—only strips of linen and the burial cloth folded up nearby.

Though overcome with grief, Mary Magdalene followed Peter and John back to the tomb where she watched quietly from the shadows until they returned to the others. She made her way to the opening wondering, “Where is my Lord.” When she reached it, Mary bent over and saw through her tears 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?”

“They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him,” she anguished as she turned away grabbing her face into her hands. The image of a man caught her eye—maybe the gardener. Then she heard her name. “**Mary,**” the tender voice said. Her spirits lifted with joy. It was not the gardener she had seen. She knew the voice. It was Jesus! He has risen. He has risen indeed!

Jesus called Mary by name that first Easter morning. Now in the holiness of this Easter morning, the voice of Jesus tenderly calls *you* by name too. He says,

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

“You are the light of the world,”

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org

¹ A story compiled from the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

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