

## **I. LET'S LOOK AT THAT SCENE WE JUST "WITNESSED" BY WAY OF HEARING THE WORD PROCLAIMED**

### **A. Mary of Magdala**

1. Faithful friend, grieving friend
2. Doing the natural thing and returning to the tomb
  - a) *Probably to grieve*
  - b) *Maybe to tend to some details of the burial which were not taken care of immediately after the execution*
  - c) *But being faithful to her relationship with her dear, now departed, friend*

### **B. And she makes an astonishing discovery**

1. The stone is not in place
2. The tomb that had been sealed three days ago is now unsealed
3. But for whatever reason
  - a) *Perhaps out of fear*
  - b) *Or because it would have been improper for her to do so*
4. She doesn't investigate

### **C. She goes and shares her discovery**

1. Perhaps the body was stolen, a possibility she herself raises
2. What will be found inside? Can we bear to know?
3. He used to say things about "after three days . . ."; could it be?

### **D. John and Peter, having received the news, go running to the tomb**

1. Perhaps angry and frustrated
2. Probably confused
3. Possibly hoping against hope . . .

### **E. Peter sees – and John believes**

1. John, the Beloved Disciple believes immediately

- a) *The one who loves much trusts readily*
- b) *The one who loves much is able to probe the mystery*

2. Peter sees the evidence

- a) *We don't know his immediate reaction*
- b) *But we know the story of his faith beyond that day*
- c) *As we heard him preach in the First Reading*
- d) *"This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."*

**F. But they do not yet understand**

- 1. That must wait for the Spirit's coming
- 2. But they still believe
- 3. He is risen indeed!
- 4. Whatever that might mean

**II. THAT SCENE OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE EMPTY TOMB IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS THE STORY OF OUR JOURNEY OF FAITH SINCE THE DAY OF OUR BAPTISM, WHEN WE FIRST DIED AND ROSE WITH CHRIST**

**A. We go about our lives with all of their normal occurrences**

- 1. Which inevitably include some times of suffering and death
- 2. But also some moments of elation
- 3. What I like to call the dyings and risings of life

**B. But as we do so, God reaches out to us and we respond by discovering that there is a purpose to those dyings and risings**

- 1. That there is a reason
- 2. That they can have a deeper meaning
- 3. That God is present in them all

**C. And hopefully that discovery causes us to share what we have discovered**

1. We share the meaning
2. We share the awareness of God's presence

**D. And then we become like the disciples running to the tomb**

1. The discovery impels us to move forward
2. To make progress on the journey
3. To grow in our awareness and appreciation of God's presence on our journey through life

**E. And then we come to see more clearly**

1. We see the fruit of God's presence in our life
2. And we might even come to believe that the seemingly miraculous can occur
  - a) *That nothing is impossible for God*
  - b) *That new life can come out of death*
  - c) *That everyone who believes in Jesus will receive forgiveness of sins through his name*
  - d) *That we have cause to celebrate because God is with us, that God never abandons us, that Jesus suffered, died, and rose so that we might see and believe*

**F. But we may not yet understand**

1. Tragedy could still befall us
2. We could still experience trials and tribulations
3. We may not always feel happy or like the circumstances we find ourselves in
4. But with the help of the Holy Spirit we can still see God's presence with us
5. And in the power of the Holy Spirit we can believe that after every cross there will be a resurrection
6. Just as, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we celebrate today after Friday's reflective observance

**III. THE TOMB IS EMPTY; SO CAN OUR TOMBS BE**

**A. Today a portion of the Christian community celebrates a mind-blocking, but soul-freeing mystery**

1. A historical figure in whom a small group of people trusted as a leader, but who died, came back to life!
2. Jesus of Nazareth, who came out of the womb now has come forth from the tomb
3. He was a walking-talking invitation to a new way of looking at life
4. He came not to solve the human experience, but to save the human experience from being fooled by easy answers.

**B. Suffering will be vindicated**

1. Death will be overcome
2. A new life will arise
3. That is the Easter message of the paschal mystery

**C. Alleluia!**

1. Christ is risen!
2. The Lord is risen indeed!
3. Alleluia!