

History

Intro. It feels really good to be here today. Last year we were not together. Now, more and more we are. Last night we sat in the dark and several people took turns reading us a story. It was a long story. Eight readings from scripture about our relationship with God and God with us. There have been a lot of good times and some bad times over two thousand years, but God never abandoned us, although it can feel like it during some of our rough times. It must have felt like that for the women in the gospel.

I. How difficult to wake up and find the energy to get out of bed that morning. Yet these three women knew they must complete the traditional burial customs for the Lord. If nothing else, it was something they could *do*; *action* instead of staying at home. This is where the passion reading on Good

Friday left off: it was preparation day for the Sabbath. As all work came to an end and the Sabbath began, there had been no time to fulfill the burial custom. Having roused each other to finish the anointing, they found another seemingly insurmountable barrier: the stone covering the entrance. Maybe they should just go home and back to bed. They persevered, pushed ahead *together* and discovered the miracle of the Lord's resurrection. Instead of saying, "Do not be *afraid*," the "young man,"- we think an angel - said, "Do not be *amazed*." How could the women not be *both afraid and amazed* by what they saw? Jesus is risen!

Concl. This past year has been like being in a tomb, barely living. We made so many adjustments. But that's nothing new; we have *always* made adjustments. This is just the latest one. Our people

moved to a new country without always being comfortable speaking the language or knowing the culture. Sometimes it was an unwelcoming culture because of differences due to language, skin color or customs. Our people came from France, Spain and Africa. Then Ireland, Germany, Italy, the Caribbean, Asia; east and west; north and south. The whole world. There were terrible epidemics brought from foreign lands. There were world wars, *depressions* and *recessions*. Each time people made adjustments and tried to recover their lives and dignity. Here we are tonight/today, beginning to emerge from the most recent catastrophe. Certainly we are not unscathed. We feel the pain of loss due to sickness and death; missed gathering with family and friends. But like the women who dragged themselves to the tomb grieving and left running, crying and laughing

to tell the others the great news, we are here in the light of the resurrection. It was clearly present last night in Zarko, Teresita, Marlie, Kristen, John, Stuart, Victor, Tona, Steve and Jim who bring new life to our family this Easter. We sang “Glory to God” and “Alleluia” for the first time in weeks. As the holy women did, we must share the good news of resurrection with ourselves and everyone else. **It is time for resurrection.**

Fr. Michael Pendergraft

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