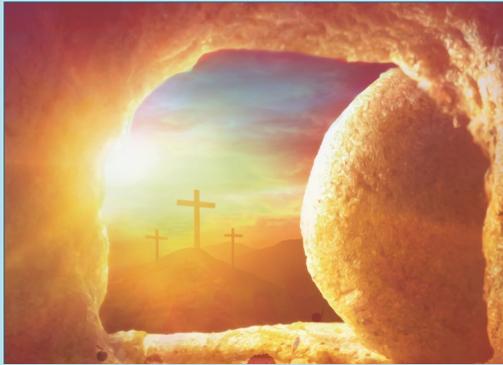


DIVE INTO THE GOSPEL



Can you imagine that moment? Can you imagine the stomach drop with dizzying realization: "It's all true. All of it is true! The past three years weren't a dream that ended horribly wrong." Can you imagine all the doubts and despair of the past days chased away like smoke on the wind by a rolled up burial cloth? By an empty tomb?

It didn't start that way, of course. "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." This frantic news from Mary Magdalene would have been another unexpected blow. After all that happened, now his body has been stolen? The love and devotion in Peter and John is apparent. They don't wait to collect more information or stop by

the tomb when they have a chance. They run to the site. When is the last time you ran for something? This isn't a run for exercise, but a huffing and puffing bolt fueled by desperation. Can you imagine that moment? The fear pounding in their temples, matching their accelerated heart rate. Can you imagine the impatient affection of John, who outruns Peter but refuses to enter the tomb alone? And then, upon entry, "He saw and believed."

This is the drama of our great feast! The promise that seemed lost has been found. The dead are raised. Long before the Easter eggs and ham, we are invited to meditate on this divine reality. We are invited to feel the desperation and joy of that first Easter Sunday deep in our bones. Because it is not just Mary's story. It's not Peter and John's story. It's our story. From the greatest defeat can come the most awe-inspiring victory, and this is true not just for our God, but for each one of us. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!