

DISCOVER

the Joy of Christ



Jesus, Risen from the Dead, is Calling Your Name

Jesus is Risen. He is Alive!

The wonder of that truth is conveyed beautifully in the sequence “Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer your thankful praises” sung just before the Gospel for the Mass of Easter Day. This magnificent hymn captures the experience of Mary Magdalene, the first to discover the empty tomb and then to encounter the Risen Christ. Often sung in Latin, the English translation of this dialogue follows, with Mary Magdalene’s words in quotes:

*Speak, Mary, declaring
What you saw, wayfaring.*

*“The tomb of Christ, who is living,
The glory of Jesus’ Resurrection;
bright angels attesting,
The shroud and napkin resting.
Yes, Christ my hope is arisen;
to Galilee He goes before you.”*

*Christ indeed from death is risen, our new life obtaining.
Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning!
Amen. Alleluia.*

Now consider this – the first disciple to whom the Risen Jesus chose to appear was a woman from whom, according to St. Luke (8:2), Jesus had cast out seven demons! If there is hope for a woman who had been under the power of seven demons, there is hope for anybody!

Just look at how far she has come. This is the same woman who two days earlier had lingered lovingly with the Blessed Mother and St. John at the foot of the cross when all the other apostles had fled in fear. Then, early on Easter morning, she has come to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body. She weeps to discover it is missing. She sees someone nearby that she thinks is a gardener and asks if He has taken the body. “Mary!” comes the reply, and in a flash she knows it is her beloved Jesus. “Rabbouni!” (Teacher), she exclaims.

It is clear from several of His appearances that the risen body of Jesus was not immediately recognizable, but in each case something familiar led those who encountered Him to recognize Him with great joy. In Mary’s case, it must have been the familiar way He called her by name.

This should make us remember Jesus’ words about Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10. He “calls His own sheep by name and leads them out” and “they recognize His voice” (3-4).

On this glorious Feast of Easter, take Jesus at His word. Believe that He literally calls you by name, just as He did Mary Magdalene! Close your eyes and imagine the Risen Son of God, the Good Shepherd, calling out to you – with gentleness, love and persistence.

Jesus wants you to hear Him, to know Him, to let Him carry you in His arms when you are weary or have lost the way. He wants to heal you with merciful forgiveness in Confession and to nourish you with His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. He wants to meet you in and through the ministry and Sacraments of His Church. And then He wants you to spread this amazing, beautiful news, to experience so much joy that you can’t contain it but must share it with others.

Wherever you are in your journey, pray to begin anew on this Easter morning, so full of light. Feel the freshness of this day with all its promise.

Close your eyes and listen. Yes, He is Risen, He is Alive, and He is calling your name.

NOTE: If this vital theme strikes a chord with you, consider attending the May 1-2 Leadership in Christ Conference: “Become What You Ought to Be and You Will Set the World on Fire!” For details, visit the diocesan website at www.dioc.org.

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