

## **Easter Sunday**

### **Matthew 28:1-10**

The morning does not begin in triumph.

It begins in the dark.

Before the sun lifts itself over the edge of the world, before the birds find their voice, before certainty returns to the bones of the living, there are women walking toward a tomb.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Carrying grief. Carrying memory. Carrying the weight of a love that had nowhere left to go.

They are not going to witness a miracle.

They are going to tend to a body.

Because that is what love does when it has been broken. It still shows up. It still walks. It still brings spices and trembling hands to what is left behind.

And the earth shakes.

Not gently. Not symbolically. But violently, as if creation itself cannot contain what is about to happen. An angel descends, the stone rolls back, and the guards collapse into fear.

And the women?

They are still standing there.

Afraid. Yes. The text says so. But also something else. Something harder to name. Something that sounds like hope but feels like dizziness.

Because the world they knew has just cracked open.

“He is not here,” the angel says. “He has been raised.”

And then the invitation. Come and see.

Come and see the place where death was supposed to win.

Come and see the absence.

Come and see the emptiness that is somehow full.

And then go. Go and tell.

And they run.

Afraid and filled with great joy.

That strange Easter combination. Fear and joy braided together so tightly you cannot separate them. The fear of losing control. The joy of something new breaking through. The fear that this cannot be true. The joy that maybe, just maybe, it is.

And then they meet him.

Not in the sky. Not in a vision. Not in an idea.

On the road.

Jesus meets them.

And they take hold of his feet. Not metaphorically. Not spiritually. They touch him. Flesh and bone. Presence and breath. And they worship.

Because resurrection is not an escape from being human.

It is the return to it.

An ancient voice in the church, St. Irenaeus once said, “The glory of God is a human being fully alive.”

Not barely surviving.

Not numbed out.

Not performing.

Fully alive.

And on Easter morning, we begin to understand that this is not just a poetic idea. It is the very heart of what God is doing.

Because what rises from the tomb is not a ghost.

It is a human life.

Fully alive.

The kind of life that eats with friends. That walks dusty roads. That breathes. That can be touched. That can be recognized in the breaking of bread and the speaking of names.

The glory of God is not somewhere far away.

It is here.

In a human being fully alive.

And that changes everything.

Because we have been taught, in a thousand quiet ways, to settle for less than that.

We have learned how to shrink.

How to protect ourselves.

How to become careful versions of ourselves. Reasonable versions. Acceptable versions. Versions that do not risk too much, do not feel too much, do not hope too much.

We have learned how to survive.

But resurrection is not about survival.

It is about life.

And not just any life.

Fully alive life.

The kind of life that cannot be contained by fear. The kind of life that cannot be sealed behind a stone. The kind of life that refuses to stay buried under shame or regret or loss.

The kind of life that keeps finding its way back to the surface.

You see it in the women running from the tomb. Not walking carefully. Running. As if something in them has already begun to rise.

You see it in their courage. They were the last at the cross. They are the first at the tomb. The first witnesses. The first preachers of resurrection.

Because being fully alive does not mean being fearless.

It means being willing to move anyway.

Afraid and filled with great joy.

That is resurrection life.

And maybe that is where this story meets us.

Not in some abstract belief about what happened long ago.

But in the question it places gently, insistently, in our hands.

Where are you not fully alive?

Where have you learned to settle for less?

Where has fear convinced you to stay still when something in you longs to run?

Because if the resurrection is real, then it is not just something that happened to Jesus.

It is something that is happening.

Still.

Quietly.

Stubbornly.

In you.

In the places where you thought nothing new could grow.

In the parts of your life that feel sealed off and finished.

In the relationships that feel like they have run out of breath.

In the grief that still sits heavy in your chest.

In the questions you carry that have no easy answers.

Resurrection does not erase those things.

It enters them.

It shakes the ground beneath them.

It rolls the stone away.

And then it says, Come and see.

Come and see what is possible here.

Come and see what life looks like when it refuses to give up.

Come and see that death does not get the final word.

And then it says, Go.

Go and live like this is true.

Go and be fully alive.

Which sounds beautiful.

Until you realize what it asks of you.

Because being fully alive is not comfortable.

It means feeling things you would rather avoid.

It means telling the truth when it would be easier to stay quiet.

It means risking connection when you have been hurt before.

It means letting joy in, even when you are not sure how long it will last.

It means stepping into a life that is larger than the one you have carefully constructed.

It means, in some way, dying to the smaller version of yourself.

So that something larger can rise.

And that is why Easter is not just a celebration.

It is an invitation.

To step into the kind of life that reflects the glory of God.

A human being fully alive.

Not perfect.

Not finished.

But alive.

Alive with compassion.

Alive with courage.

Alive with imagination.

Alive with a kind of hope that is not naive, but defiant.

A hope that has seen the cross and still chooses to believe that life is stronger.

And maybe that is what we carry with us today.

Not certainty.

But movement.

Not answers.

But a direction.

The women leave the tomb and they run.

And somewhere on the road, they meet him.

Which is how it still works.

We do not wait until we understand everything.

We begin to move.

We take one step toward life.

One step toward honesty.

One step toward love.

And somewhere along the way, we discover that we are not alone.

That the risen Christ is already there.

Meeting us.

Calling our name.

Inviting us deeper into this strange, beautiful, terrifying gift of being alive.

The glory of God is a human being fully alive.

And this morning, in ways we may not yet understand,  
that glory is rising.

In you.

In us.

In the world.

Afraid.

And filled with great joy.

That's because Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, indeed!  
Amen! Alleluia!

Amen.