



Seasons of Holiness

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Sharing the Good News

As we continue to celebrate Easter and reflect on the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, let us reflect on that wonderful Easter Sunday, when Christ appeared to the women. As you may remember, his apostles were in hiding; afraid for their safety, while the women, whom knew and loved Jesus, left their homes carrying the spices previously prepared to complete the Jewish burial ritual. (Mt. 28:1-3; Mk. 16:1-3; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1).

As we know, during Jesus' time, women did not enjoy an equal status with that of men. They were seen as inferior; yet, these marginalized women risked their safety to serve Jesus, even after he was dead.

As Mary Magdalen rushes to the tomb, she sees Jesus (Jn. 20:11-16; Mk. 16:9). In this brief encounter, Jesus purposefully instructs Mary Magdalen to "go and share the good news of His resurrection." He does not instruct Mary Magdalen to go fetch the apostles for Him, so that He can then tell them himself that He is Risen. No, Jesus trusts and commissions a woman, to preach with others the Good News!

Through these simple words Jesus again reminds us that all of God's creation is blessed. By this simple request, Jesus reminds us that women are also called to share and preach the Good News of the Gospel!



What is Mass? (Part 1 of 2)

Perhaps the best way to describe the Mass is to think of it as Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday made present today in ritual.

It is not merely a meal that should remind us of the Last Supper, or a Passion Play which helps us recall Good Friday, or a Sunrise Service which celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus.

The bishops at the Second Vatican Council brought together these three mysteries (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday) in a multifaceted description of the Mass: *"At the Last Supper, on the night when he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until he should come again and in this way to entrust to his beloved Bride, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet 'in which Christ is eaten, the heart is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us' (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #42).*

The ritual of the Mass is both a meal and a sacrifice. But in an effort to better explain what is Mass, let's take a brief "walk through" of the different parts of the Mass.

To keep things simple, let's think of it as a special time where we gather for a meal with friends. When our friends arrive, we all sit and talk. Eventually, we move to the table, say grace, pass the food and begin to eat and drink. Finally, it is time for them to leave and go home.

On our walk through the Mass, we will follow a similar format, but we will call it:

- 1) gathering rite,
- 2) storytelling,
- 3) meal sharing, and
- 4) commissioning.

This month, we will focus on the first two rites.



