

Homily For Tuesday of the First Week of Easter - Year II

St Peter's 8:30am/7:00pm Masses - April 19, 2022

Acts 2:36-41 "God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Psalms 33:4-5,18-22 "Let your steadfast love be upon us, Lord, even as we hope in you."

John 20:11-18 "Mary Magdalene stood weeping. Jesus said, 'Go tell my brothers.'"

Recognize the Lord

Introduction

Two men were best of friends from early childhood all the way through university. Moving to different cities, they gradually drifted apart over the next ten years. One day they happened to be in the same city and were walking across a bridge from opposite directions. Passing each other, they looked up for a moment, then went on their way, quickly forgetting the thought that they might have met before. Ten years later, they happen to be walking across the same bridge. This time, they stop and one says: I think I know you. The other says, yes, me too. We crossed paths on this bridge ten years ago. The first one agrees that was how they knew each other.

I remember this joke from when I was a teen, because it made me think. Today, we could also think about recognizing Christ in our lives. Closeness to Christ can come and go. Mary Magdalene did not at first recognize the Lord she had been following closely since he transformed her life three years earlier. Then she recognized him in a new way. Peter had known Jesus better than anyone, as his best friend, yet didn't remember what the Lord had said would happen until the Holy Spirit filled him with new knowledge. Then he knew him in a powerful new way. Both Mary and Peter went from knowing him in an amazing yet limited way, to knowing him as the glorified Lord of everything, of all time and space, the victor even over sin and death.

We are now in the third day of the octave of Easter. It's one continuous joyful solemnity as we recognize Jesus having passed through death to resurrected life. This is what makes the Christian hope unique. The way of the cross has become

the way of light. From 40 days of repentance to 50 days of joyful celebration. This is the time for us to recognize him again.

Acts

On that first Pentecost, Peter spoke with the full power of the Holy Spirit. He tells them that they put to death the author of life. The blind killed the one who showed them how to see. The loveless killed the one who brought them love.

Can you imagine being there listening to Peter's amazing speech. If we were convinced of what he said, that we had put Jesus on the cross, then we would be cut to the heart. The point is not necessarily whether any of us would have shouted "Crucify him." The point is that Jesus died to redeem sinful humanity, and we are all clearly members of that sinful humanity. Peter knows his own sin. That's why he has authority when he calls everyone out. "You killed him, this man who was Lord and Messiah." And the people listening to Peter ask in desperation, "What should we do?" Is it too late to recognize him? The answer is no. That's the transformative moment for them and for us. Repent. Be baptized or, for us, live out your Baptism. Receive forgiveness. Tell others so they can recognize him.

Do you remember when Peter wept bitterly? After receiving the Lord's mercy and forgiveness, he knows and can proclaim to the crowds, "Know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah."

Gospel of John

Mary Magdalene also wept. She had a deep devotion to Jesus. She was at the cross. She saw his wounds and his suffering and the hatred of the world directed at him. She heard his last words and his last breath. Now even his body is gone.

Why are you weeping, both the angel, then Jesus, ask her? The question is for her to articulate an answer, not to test her. Mary's tears kept her from seeing Jesus for who he is. Her broken heart kept her from being able to hear his familiar voice. Her crying ends when she hears her name called with that special love. Immediately her task became: Tell the others. I am not dead. I am alive.

Mary becomes the messenger, providing hope for those who are looking for something but don't know what it is, for those who are weeping. When have we seen the Lord? Was it in a former enthused state? Was it in some chance meeting that we didn't recognize at the time?

She tells them, "I have seen the Lord." This is not just a statement of facts. It is a proclamation, a witness of transformed life, in relationship with the resurrected Lord.

If we spend 40 days on Jesus death, we must spend 50 days on his resurrected life. Acts Chapter 2 tells the Pentecost event, the Holy Spirit coming with power to announce and inspire the Church. But Chapter one always comes before Chapter two. And that is the risen Lord.

Call To Action

It is not infrequent today to find many Christians that cannot clearly see what will come after this life and who, therefore, have doubts about Jesus' resurrection. On the other hand, there are too those Christians who have enough faith to follow Jesus privately, but who are afraid of apostolically proclaiming it.

Our lives must be different than before if that resurrected life is to be transformative for us and the world. We must begin a new relationship, a new recognition of one our culture barely remembers any more.

Bishop McGrattan: The celebration of Easter takes us beyond the Cross of Good Friday, to the joy and hope that comes from knowing that the Risen Lord is truly present in the world and in the lives of believers. Initially, they did not recognize him. This was to signify the need to let go of their knowing him in the flesh so that they could become attached to him in his resurrected body, no longer bound by space or time. Christ has the power to transform our lives, to move us beyond the empty tomb to the hope of Easter belief. He commissioned Mary as one sent to the Apostles, who were to bring this good news of the resurrection to the world.

Spend time meditating on the Easter Gospel passages, allowing God to speak to your hearts through them. Enjoy God's goodness such that joy overflows from our spirits. Renew your efforts to bring others closer to Christ, those near and those far away.

Let us recognize our Lord once again, as if it is for the first time. The world wants us to shut up and pretend we don't know him. Instead, let us proclaim him Lord and Messiah, of our lives and for the world. Say to everyone, "I have seen the Lord." You can too.

Key Passages

Entrance Antiphon: *He gave them the water of wisdom to drink.*

Collect: *O God, provide heavenly gifts, that your people may rejoice in heaven over what gladdens them now on earth.*

Acts: *On the day of Pentecost, Peter raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said: Brothers, what should we do? Peter said: Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you, your children, all who are far away, and all who the Lord our God calls to him. Those who welcomed the message were baptized, and that day about three thousand were added to their number.*

Psalm: *The earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord. Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who hope in his steadfast love, to deliver their souls from death. Our soul waits for the Lord. He is our help and shield. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.*

John: *Mary Magdalene stood weeping outside the tomb. In the tomb she saw two angels in white, where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her: Woman why are you weeping? She said to them: "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she turned, she saw Jesus standing there, but did not know that it was him. Jesus*

said to her: Why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener she said: "Tell me where you have laid him." Jesus said to her: Mary! Mary said: Rabbouni. Jesus said: Go tell my brothers I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary went and announced to the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!"