

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL MARCH 27, 2016

The Rev. Dr. Catherine Brall, Director of Field Education, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 24:1-12

1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in, they did not find the body. 4 While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. 5 The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. 6 Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” 8 Then they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

DEVOTIONAL

The women in Luke’s account of the resurrection start out so well. They begin at daybreak to do everything that they know to do—as they’ve been taught by their culture and traditions—to honor, mourn, and properly care for the body of their friend and Rabbi, Jesus. The first surprise comes when they find the gravestone has been unexpectedly rolled away. Undeterred, they bravely enter the tomb to proceed with their work. The lack of a body leaves them perplexed and perhaps wondering what to do next. It is only when the two angels suddenly appear to explain what’s really going on that the women become terrified.

Our carefully prepared and well intentioned plans are no match for the radical disconnect that we, too, can encounter in our attempts faithfully to follow our Risen Lord Jesus. Resurrected living challenges us in our own moments of terror to listen as these women did, to seek for God’s perspective and meaning in the midst of circumstances we didn’t anticipate and can’t understand. Resurrected living invites us to remember the promises our God has made to us in the Word. Finally, resurrected living calls us to bear testimony and share what we have seen, experienced and learned.

PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for the glory of your Resurrection and the amazing ways you continue to work in and through your people even in these present times. Help us, Lord, to put away terror and to seek past blindness when things don’t go according to our plans and we are left perplexed about how to do the work we believe you have called us to do. Grant us, Risen Lord, to see, know, and trust the truth of Your Resurrection and the power and wisdom provided through Your Holy Spirit for each and every day of our lives. Amen.

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