

# From Tears of Sorrow to Tears of Joy

Daily Gospel / Liturgical Cycle B

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Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabboni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding onto me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and what he told her.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, you are the source of all life because you are life itself. Your resurrection gives me the hope of being raised from the dead to rejoice with you in heaven forever. I need to reflect more often on the good you have done for us and on your promises to those who put their trust in you. Thank you, Jesus, for taking up your life again and leading the way home to heaven. I love you, and I want to follow after you with all my heart. I want to cooperate more fully with you in bringing many others there with me.

Petition: Lord, grant me a faith that is alive, operative and fruitful.

1. Blinded by Love, Mary Stayed Weeping: St. John observes that "they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (John 20:9). Because the reality of the Resurrection had not yet entered into the mind, and much less the heart, Mary stayed weeping outside Christ's tomb. Take this moment to contemplate this moving scene which shows Mary's deep love for Our Lord. Even angels could not persuade her with their questioning: "Why are you weeping?" Admire her love; imitate her love; want what she wanted – to be with her Lord, always! May our love for Our Lord give us the same fortitude in love that Mary showed at the tomb.

2. They Had Taken Her Love Away: Poor Mary! The sorrows of her life were so mean and pitiful. One sad day, desperation had led her into a life of prostitution. With her dignity gone, her empty soul seemed suited only to be a haven for roaming devils (cf. Luke 8:3; Mark 16:9). The world, the flesh and the devil saw her only with contempt and selfish opportunity. But Our Lord had seen her differently and loved her differently. The love that he had restored to her life, however, was now trampled upon as she contemplated his empty tomb. See her heart, already heavy with grief and horror as she had witnessed her Lord mistreated, beaten and crucified. All these thoughts welled up in her mind and caused her to conclude, "They have taken my Lord." Feel the depths of her helplessness as she finished her thought: "And I don't know where they laid him."

3. "Why Are You Weeping?" Mary's love was at the right time, in the right place and for the right person. Her tears were for her Lord. Jesus, moved by Mary's expression of love, would not let her remain in such a state. It is now Christ who asks her, "Why are you weeping?" In effect, Jesus is saying, "The sins of your past will no longer have power over you. Nor will those cruel men, or the devil. I am here and I am the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth and the Life! Sin, evil men, the devil, and death itself might stake their claim on you, but they cannot have you, for you are mine! I have bought you with the price of my own blood; I have laid down my life for you, my friend!" Our Lord sums up this great truth with but a simple, tender utterance of her name: "Mary". Yes, Jesus knows us personally and loves us in a personal way. We must come to our senses and believe in the truth of the Resurrection. We must believe in Jesus.

Conversation with Christ: Lord, you lead me to life everlasting. Let me draw ever closer to you, trusting always in your ways and never fearing the cross. May I love you from the little cross of my life, whatever its form or character may be.

Resolution: I will seek out a friend I may have alienated by my bad example or lack of self-control, and I will strive to be reconciled

through a generous act of charity and understanding.