

# SUNDAY MESSENGER



“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”

## You will see Him there

A legend says that the woman who anointed our Lord for his burial on Holy Wednesday (Mk 14:3-9) left Jerusalem immediately after that. She went to Galilee and arrived at Capernaum exactly on Easter morning. She entered the house of Jesus and started to sweep the floor and arrange things. When she was done, she sat down and waited. How did she know?

### From Galilee to Jerusalem

The journey on foot from Galilee to the Holy City took four to five days. According to Mark's Gospel, our Redeemer conducted his ministry mainly in Galilee and neighboring regions. He never went to Jerusalem. Quite the opposite. It was Jerusalem that was coming to Him to see, to listen, and to investigate His teaching and mighty deeds. But then came the time, when He decided to go there. During that journey, He lets His disciples know that He is going to be handed over to the leaders, sentenced to death, crucified, and then on the third day He would rise (Mark 8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-37). Yet, they did not get it.

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid

(Mark 16:1-8)

In the city, just before his arrest, our Savior predicts that they "will all fall away", but adds: "after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee" (Mk 14:27-28). They did indeed fall away. Moreover, they could not grasp the whole talk about the resurrection "questioning what this rising from the dead might mean" (Mk 9:10). None of them expected to see their Master alive again.

Then, comes that Sunday morning with its incredible news that He is alive and wants to see them. A young man instructs the women: "go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you" (Mk 16:7).

For the Evangelist, Jerusalem is the scene of death and resurrection, but Galilee is the place of the encounter.

### Back to Galilee

During the wedding at Cana the mother of Jesus informed the servants "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5). They obeyed and a miracle materialized: water became the best wine. Today, we hear a call to go to Galilee. What is going to happen?

Our four Gospels contain eight encounters between the risen Christ and His male and female followers. Most of them occurred in the Holy City, but two happened in Galilee.

The first Galilean encounter is recorded in the Gospel of John (21:1-23). The disciples are back to their hometown and try to live as before. It seems that they did not go there to meet Jesus but to forget what happened on Good Friday. We see them taking nets again in their hands. No more preaching, healing, and expelling demons. The fire got extinguished. Under such circumstances they met the risen Jesus and the Good News began anew.

The second Galilean encounter is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. "Now the eleven disciples went

to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them" (Matt 28:16). Here, their purpose was not to leave behind the tragedy of Good Friday but to celebrate Easter Sunday. They are not to think about their former lives but prepare themselves for a new beginning that will take them to the ends of the earth.

Galilee is the place of the encounter. There, the disciples met the Word that became flesh and also there, they met the Word that overcame death.

### Conclusion

Each of us has his or her own Jerusalem. It is the site of our bitter cry "my God, why have you forgotten me", the site of our defeat. We do not like to go there. We would rather spend our days in Galilee where success follows success. Yet, if we do not go up there to face the cross, we cannot have a share in Jesus' victory. Our failure is the most precious, the most valuable experience we possess. It allows God to recreate us anew.

Each of us also has his or her own Galilee. There, we met Jesus for the first time and began to follow Him. Yet, also there, we will meet Him again, get healed and renewed after our tragic failure. Nobody has expressed it better than prophet Hosea:

"Come, let us return to the Lord;  
He attacked, and He can heal us;  
He wounded, and He can bind us up.  
After two days he will revive us;  
on the third day he will raise us up,  
that we may live before him" (Hosea 6:1-2).

Death and resurrection takes place in Jerusalem. Life for God begins again in Galilee. Let us go and meet our Redeemer there.

*The Lord is Risen. He is truly Risen!*

*Happy Easter to All of You*