

Gospel and Sermon Transcript -Easter Sunday - April 5, 2026

00:21

>> Early on the first day of the week while it was still dark,

00:25

Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw

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that the stone had been removed.

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She ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple,

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the one who Jesus loved, and she said to them,

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they've taken the Lord out of the tomb

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and we don't know where they have laid him.

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Then Peter and the other disciple set out

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and went toward the tomb.

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The two were running together,

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but the other disciple outran Peter

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and reached the tomb first.

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He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

01:04

Then Simon Peter came following him and went into the tomb, and he saw the linen wrappings

01:10

lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings,

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but rolled up in a place by itself.

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Then the other disciple who reached the tomb first also went in and he saw and believed.

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For as yet they did not understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead.

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Then these disciples returned to their homes.

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Why do you seek the living among the dead?

01:43

He is not here.

01:45

He is risen just as he said.

01:48

Hallelujah, Christ is risen, he is risen indeed.

01:53

Hallelujah.

01:57

Rise and body or spirit as we hear the gospel.

02:02

The holy gospel according to Saint John, the 20th chapter.

02:06

Glory to you, oh Lord.

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But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.

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As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb,

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and she saw two angels in white sitting

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where the body of Jesus had been laying,

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one at the head, the other at the feet.

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They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

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And she said to them, "They have taken away my Lord,

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and I do not know where they have laid him."

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And when she had said this, she turned around

02:42

saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. And Jesus said to

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her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the

02:58

gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where and I

03:05

will take him away. And Jesus said to her, Mary, and she turned and said to him in

03:15

Hebrew, rabbunai, which means teacher. And Jesus said to her, do not hang on to me

03:22

because I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to

03:27

them, I am ascending to my father and to your father and to my God and to your

03:33

God. Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord." And

03:43

then she told them that he had said these things to her. The gospel of our Lord.

03:51

Please be seated.

03:55

[Silence]

The Sermon

04:08

grace and peace to you from the one who was, who is, and who is to come.

04:19

The story I'm about to tell probably has, pardon me, Easter voice,

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happens to people who talk too much.

04:30

The story I'm about to tell has some currency I think.

04:36

Our friend Jeff, his father was part of the Air Force during the Vietnam War that the

04:41

United States was embroiled in many decades back now.

04:47

Well, their plane was shot down and his dad was never found.

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Decades later, he would talk about how wounded and empty he still felt, not knowing

05:01

what had become of his dad, really.

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It wouldn't be until about 10 years ago

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that his dad's body was recovered.

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And then he would talk a bit about a sense of completeness,

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a sense of knowing, a sense maybe of resolution of sorts,

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but at least a path to healing.

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That might be some of Mary's story too.

05:37

Her beloved teacher dies a brutal death.

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She goes to do what she thinks is the only thing left for her to do.

05:46

And that's to weep.

05:49

And to mourn.

05:52

And now there's not even a body.

05:56

Really a place for her to take her grief.

06:02

Mary had suffered a lot in life. The scripture is pretty clear about that. Now

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those wanting to paint Mary's life as a bit racy, I'm here to tell you that that

06:16

was a priggish imagination and of medieval times. It really was. It was a

06:23

bunch of guys in the medieval era who cooked up all of these other fanciful

06:28

things about Mary. But we do know that she struggled with things like mental

06:34

illness. She struggled with spiritual distress. And at one point Jesus, as the

06:42

scripture describes it, released her of seven different varieties of suffering

06:49

and agony. This Mary, who suffered so much, loved lavishly. You might know this

06:59

Shortly after Lazarus was raised and shortly before Jesus was arrested, Mary

07:07

takes very costly oil. She breaks open a jar, perfume permeates the house, and she

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slathers it onto Jesus' feet and wipes it with her hair.

07:23

If Mary didn't have some sort of estrangement from the other disciples,

07:29

and if she wasn't the object of some sort of jealousy,

07:34

she was now Judas.

07:37

Yeah, yeah, that Judas, yeah.

07:40

Says to her, "Well, how foolish.

07:43

You could have spent that money to feed the poor."

07:48

And then Jesus says,

07:50

Let it be this way and this story whenever it's told will be in memory of her

07:57

And so we tell it again today

08:00

This is Mary Magdalene

08:08

Everybody else had gone home

08:11

They had drawn their own conclusions about what they saw with a stone rolled away a tomb that was vacant and grave

08:18

that had been set aside. Mary remained and she wept. She was likely convinced

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that somebody had desecrated the body of Jesus even further by stealing it. Even

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the Roman Empire believed that grave robbery was such an

08:45

an egregious thing that it was punishable by death.

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And so when these personages appear, Mary wants to know, "Where's the body?"

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Don't you have any decency?

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Could you at least tell me where the body is so that I could respectfully take it and

09:03

put it in a place where it won't be further defiled?"

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And someone behind her asks, and she turns on her heel,

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and she figures, well, maybe this one took the body.

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This gardener, maybe in charge of the garden tomb area,

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has taken the body and moved it elsewhere.

09:26

And couldn't he have the decency to tell her

09:29

where the body was now?

09:32

She could take it then, move it somewhere else,

09:37

"Reprepare it and re-enter, and that would be that."

09:47

Except that wasn't that.

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This third stranger, he calls Mary by name.

09:57

And it's like when Jesus said that the sheep hear

10:00

the voice of the beloved shepherd and they respond.

10:03

Mary is like that when she leaps bodily at this risen Jesus, not a missing body, but a

10:11

bodily resurrected Jesus, and she wraps her arms around him and she calls him beloved

10:17

teacher and she hangs on for all she's worth.

10:25

But for at least the second time in a day, she's not allowed to hang on.

10:31

allowed to hang on to her grief when a body is presumed missing and now not

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allowed to hang on to maybe wouldn't it be great if life could just be rewound

10:44

and we could pick up from where we left off. Jesus says to her that his work is

10:52

not quite done, that he would be now ascending into the heavens, that he would

11:01

return to the one that He calls Father.

11:06

And He chooses Mary.

11:08

He chooses Mary to tell the story.

11:13

Go back to those other disciples,

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whatever conclusions they've drawn,

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whether they be ones of faith or doubt or a mixture,

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and isn't that our story anyway?

11:24

But go back and tell them

11:28

that Jesus is indeed risen

11:31

about to complete his work.

11:37

So Mary tells these official disciples

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with their three years of intensive training,

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I don't know if they gave them certificates back then,

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but she tells them, "I have seen the Lord."

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You know, it's just possible

11:58

that she was the one who saw Jesus most clearly all along from the beginning.

12:06

And now Jesus calls her by name, and life starts again, and it starts new.

12:17

And this Mary Magdalene, she leads the way for the rest of us.

12:24

a path where maybe we too come to trust that we might have this abundant life in the name

12:31

of this one who calls Mary by name and who calls us by name too.

12:47
Amen.