**“From Weeping to Witnessing”**
Easter Sunday, 20 April 2025

Isaiah 65:17–25 | Acts 10:34–43 | Luke 24:1–12

**Grace and peace to you this Easter morning.**

We gather today to celebrate not just an event of the past, but a truth that still transforms lives: **Christ is risen.** And this truth, this message of life triumphing over death, was not first proclaimed by kings or priests, but by a small group of women, **the first to come to the tomb, and the first to carry the Good News of the resurrection.**

**God Entrusted the Resurrection to Women**

The Gospel of Luke takes us to the quiet darkness of early morning. The women—Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others—came to the tomb carrying spices. They came in mourning, expecting death. Instead, they found the stone rolled away, and they were greeted by a vision of light and a declaration that would change the world:
**“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.”**

It’s easy to miss just how radical this moment was. In a society where women’s testimony was not even admissible in court, God entrusted the greatest truth of our faith—the resurrection of Jesus Christ— to **women**. Not the apostles. Not the priests. Not the scribes or elders.

God chose these women as the first witnesses. Not because they were the most qualified by human standards, but because they were the ones who showed up. Because they were faithful. Because they were the ones who care. Because love brought them to the tomb when others stayed away.

**The Women's Witness Was Dismissed—And So Are Many Voices Today**

Luke tells us that when the women ran to share the good news with the apostles, **“these words seemed to them an idle tale.”** Even in the earliest moments of the Church, the truth was there, but it was **not believed** because of **who delivered it**. Isn’t that still true today? How many people are still dismissed, their truth questioned, their experience minimized, simply because of who they are?

These women represent more than themselves. They stand for **all those whose voices have been dismissed** in society, women, the poor, migrants, people of color, the abused, the ignored.

The Easter message is this: **God listens to the ones the world ignores.** God believes the ones others doubt. And God continues to call **the unexpected and overlooked** to be the bearers of new life.

**God’s Resurrection Power Breaks the Barriers of Gender and Power**

We must also confront this truth: Even today, **many churches, institutions, and communities** are still not ready to trust or empower women as leaders. Despite the clear witness of Scripture, despite the Spirit’s calling, women are often told to step back, to be quiet, to wait. But the resurrection proclaims a new order. The stone wasn’t rolled away just to let Jesus out, it was rolled away to **let us see** that God’s way is not like ours.

God did not wait for the apostles to gather in a council. God did not ask for permission. God simply **sent women to proclaim life**. That act should reshape the way we think about leadership, about trust, about who gets to speak, and who gets to lead. If **God trusted women to be the first to proclaim the resurrection**, how can we do less?

**The Vision of Isaiah and the Witness of Peter Confirm This Truth**

The reading from Isaiah offers a breathtaking vision:

*A new heaven and a new earth... no more weeping... no more distress... peace even among wolves and lambs.* This vision begins in that garden where the tomb lay empty. It begins with women who came weeping and left proclaiming the dawn of a new creation.

And in Acts, Peter boldly declares:
**“I truly understand that God shows no partiality.”** He proclaims that the risen Christ brings forgiveness to *everyone who believes*. There are no walls, no favorites, no status lines in God’s kingdom. **The resurrection breaks every dividing wall, including the walls we still try to build today.**

**From Weeping to Witnessing: Our Call Today**

These women teach us how to live Easter:
They came in grief, they met resurrection, and they went out with courage. They were the first preachers of Easter. They were the first apostles of the risen Lord. They were the first to say, “Christ is risen.”

So today, if you come with weeping, know that God meets you with hope. If you feel overlooked or unheard, know that God chooses people like you to carry light into the world. And if you’ve been silent too long, know that God is calling you—like the women—to **speak, to go, to witness.**

**The Gospel Begins in Unexpected Places**

The resurrection is not just the end of death— It is the end of silence. It is the end of dismissing the ones who show up. It is the beginning of a community where **all are heard, and all are called**. This Easter, let us be a Church that believes those whom the world overlooks. Let us be a people who make space at the table. Let us follow the women from **weeping to witnessing**. And let us join them in proclaiming the message that changed everything: **Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**