

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

He is risen!

A long time ago, when I was little boy, I looked forward to Easter morning. My parents would always make an Easter basket for me, my sister and my brother, they would get each of us a stuffed animal of some kind. We couldn't have any candy until after breakfast, then we have one piece, then it was get ready to go to church. I knew there was something significant that happened on Easter, but unlike Christmas, I didn't really understand just what it was. Of course what child does understand death and resurrection, especially when a mind was focused on chocolate bunnies and various types of candy Easter eggs.

On that very first Easter morning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary go to the tomb of Jesus. Then there's an earthquake when an angel descends and rolls back the stone, guards around the tomb are as of dead men, the angel's appearance is like lightning, and the angel tells the two women "Do not be afraid." And continues "He has been raised as he said... go quickly and tell his disciples 'he has been raised from the dead, and indeed is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.'"

With fear and great joy they leave the tomb and run to tell Jesus' disciples and suddenly come face to face with Jesus, who again tells them "Do not be afraid" and continues "go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Jesus who was crucified isn't in the tomb, he has been raised from the dead! Jesus was dead, now he is alive, he is going ahead of you to Galilee, go quickly and tell his disciples. The two women leave quickly with great joy, death has been conquered by the risen Lord. These women, our sisters, found love, found joy, found more than they bargained for. They found that death is not just the end to life, but instead a door to transformed lives, fullness of life, and they ran to share the news that the risen Lord had gone ahead of them to Galilee.

"He has been raised as he said." I want to emphasize those three little words at the end of that sentence, "as he said." These three words are a reminder to us that God does what he says and he keeps his promises, we can count on that.

He is going ahead of you to Galilee, reminds me of the Great Commission, Go therefore and make disciples, and lo I am with you always even to the end of the age. Jesus is ahead of us all the way, guiding us.

Now what possible difference does any of this make to you and me. "As he said" he has been raised from the dead, raised by the glory of the Father. More than earth changing, this has cosmic significance and it's the most important news you'll ever hear. "Go quickly," exactly what you and I should do, go quickly and tell his disciples, go quickly and tell others who have never heard of this earth shaking, earth changing news. Tell them what? Tell them that Jesus who was crucified has

been raised from the dead, because faith comes from hearing and what is heard is the word of Jesus. And how are people to believe unless they hear the Good News, and how are they to hear the Good News except by those who are sent, who are told to "go quickly" and share this news.

You and I are to share our faith, you and I are to share the gospel of Jesus Christ, to news that he who was crucified has been raised from the dead. You and I are to share that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that all who believe may have eternal life.

Jesus is waiting for us, he has crossed the chasm that separates us from God and he is waiting to take us across. Jesus cleanses us by baptism and in the blood of the Lamb, he gives us grace through faith and we are forgiven as he waits here for us.

Jesus told our sisters to "go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee there they will see me!" We have his promise! The promise of Easter! Whenever we share the good news of Easter, the story of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, with anyone else whether we are four, forty or 110 years old, Jesus is there, because wherever two or more are gathered in his name he is there, and when we tell his story we are meeting him at Galilee! This is the good news, the best news, for you and I, this changes everything.

HE IS RISEN!!! AMEN