

Living the Word

A Bible Study for Missionary Discipleship

Session 5

John 20: 1-2, 11-18

“Whom are you looking for?”



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OPENING PRAYER

God of life and love, pour forth Your Spirit to inspire me with Your words of compassion, forgiveness and love. Stir in me a desire to renew my faith and deepen my relationship with Jesus, Your son. Open my heart to hear and live your Gospel message. Strengthen me to be a Missionary Disciple, a sharer of the Good News in words and witness proclaiming your all-inclusive love, mercy, and grace in all that I do. Amen

OPENING PSALM

(create two groups and take turns reading together)

Philippians 2:6-11

Group 1

6 Though he was in the form of God,
 Jesus did not deem equality with God
 as something to be grasped at,
7 Rather, he emptied himself,
 and took the form of a slave,
 being born in the likeness of men.
And being found in human form,
8 He was known to be of human estate,
and it was thus that he humbled himself
 obediently accepting even death,
death on a cross!

Group 2

⁹ Because of this God also highly exalted him
 and bestowed on him the name
 above every name.
10 so that at Jesus' name
 every knee must bend, in the heavens, on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God the Father: Jesus Christ is Lord!

OPENING REFLECTION VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neqP7d-O8Q0>

THIS WEEKS BIBLE PASSAGE

“Whom are you looking for?”

Who will you announce the risen Lord to?

John 20: 1-2, 11-18

The Resurrection of Jesus

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look^[a] into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew,^[b] “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

REFLECTION

It is early morning of the 1st Easter. It's dark. It's quiet. Mary of Magdala comes to the tomb still in shock and sadness of what had transpired in the last 48 hours. Her master and companion, Jesus, suffered an excruciating crucifixion and death.

She thinks back to when she first met Him – how He had healed her physically and mentally and had forgiven her sin. Such grace and mercy she was given on her first encounter with Jesus! And how she continued to follow Jesus and grow in friendship. She witnessed His miracles, she heard His voice in His teachings. She experienced the love, the peace and the joy she found in Jesus.

While still in the quiet garden with deep sorrow, Mary doesn't recognize Jesus until He says her name... "Mary!" Something changed in the atmosphere of her soul and she believed. She knew His voice when He called her name. Jesus! Our Master, our Savior, our Friend, our Healer.... The list goes on and on.

Jesus tells her to "Go and tell my brothers and tell them" what she has seen and heard. She has been sent.

Did Mary Magdala ever wonder if she was "good enough" to share her experiences with Jesus? She did not hold a position in the Church. She did not go through training or instruction to be "qualified" to share the Good News. What propelled her to run back to witness to her friends as Jesus had sent her to do?

Mary had a heart on fire. She had seen the Resurrected Jesus and witnessed the victory over death. She saw the fulfillment of God's promises. She had hope. She had experienced the love, joy, peace, mercy and grace of Jesus Christ! She had a friendship with Jesus that as her love for Him grew deeper, so did her desire to share Jesus with others.

Was she "qualified" to be sent as a Missionary Disciple and witness to others? Yes. Are you? Yes. St. Peter tells us we must "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks...for a reason for our hope." 1 Peter 3:15.

PAUSE FOR SILENT PRAYER

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How have you experienced Jesus?

How can your experience be shared with others so that they, too, may encounter and accompany Jesus?

As a Missionary Disciple, how is God sending you out to share your experience with Jesus and the Good News?

CALL TO ACTION

St. John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio*, Latin for (The **Mission** of the Redeemer) stated that the first form of evangelization is witness: “people today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories.”

The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission.

Who is Jesus sending you to witness to?

CLOSING PRAYER

Missionary Discipleship Prayer

Leader: *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed?

And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?

And how can they hear without someone to preach?

And how can people preach unless they are sent? –Romans 10: 13-15

All:Heavenly Father,

Pour forth your Holy Spirit to inspire us with these words from Holy Scripture,

so that we might be strengthened to go forth
and witness to the Gospel in our daily lives
through our words and actions.

In moments of hesitation, remind us:

- If not me, then who will proclaim the Gospel?
- If not now, then when will the Gospel be proclaimed?
- If not the truth of the Gospel, then what shall I proclaim?

Give us the grace that we might hear the call of the New Evangelization

and become a Missionary Disciple, deepening our faith,
growing in confidence to proclaim the Gospel
and boldly witnessing to the saving grace of your Son,
Jesus Christ.

O Mary, our Immaculate Mother, pray for us.

Inspire us to imitate your example
as the first disciple of your son, Jesus,
who is Lord for ever and ever.

Amen.

Leader:*Mary, Star of the New Evangelization*, All: pray for us.

St. Joseph, All: pray for us.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, All: pray for us.

St. John Paul II, All: pray for us.