



Easter Tears

Excerpts from a Sermon

Johann Christoph Blumhardt

Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" ([John 20:11-18](#)).

In the Gospels there is something especially endearing that gives us much to think about. Jesus did not remain hidden after he had risen from the grave. Jesus is near and shows himself, even if not in such a way that we are allowed to see him with our own eyes and hear him with our own ears. Nevertheless, we can feel how near he is.

To whom does Jesus appear? Take Mary for example. She was looking for the Lord, whom she had lost, and she found him. It is the same today. There are many who feel they have lost the Savior. For whatever reason, Jesus is dead to them. But if we keep on looking, if we seek in spite of the loss and turn to God in prayer, the One we have lost will let himself be found by us. He is never far from those who seek. Jesus is always near seeking hearts. Those who feel they have lost Jesus are actually the very ones in whom Jesus has special joy. They are the ones he is seeking.

But notice that Mary wasn't just seeking what she had lost. She was weeping. She was beside herself in tears. And because of her tears, Jesus was moved to make himself known to her. Jesus sees Mary weeping and looks into her deeply troubled heart. He cannot look any longer, and so quickly reveals himself to her.

We can perhaps imagine Mary's pain. It was great; greater than the pain of most people. It's hard to imagine any greater pain than that of thinking one has found what one was looking for and then being deceived in one's hope. It was bitterly hard for Mary. She could do nothing but weep. But then the Savior comes and says, "Why do you weep? Whom are you seeking?" Mary's initial response offered her little help. So Jesus brings her to himself and does so with the single word, "Mary!" Yes, she hears her name. And then her eyes are opened. All at once everything is changed. She is met.

What does this story tell us? For one thing, it tells that Jesus comes especially close to those who weep, especially if their tears stem from higher longings, if they are tears of the spirit, tears for peace of heart because one cannot find inward calm or because one feels so oppressed and without a comforter, without a helper.

Jesus always comes close to those who weep so. For this reason, we can be certain that where we see someone weeping, Jesus is not far away. Because of this we should be glad to be with those who weep, for in so doing we immediately come into the company of Christ. He is there too. We harm only ourselves if we run away from those who are sad, oppressed, grieved, and

St Mary's
Parish

Serving
the
Community

Serving
the
Family

Serving
the
City

weeping. When we are afraid of being moved by people's pain, when we avoid those who are hurting and in despair, we are afraid of Jesus himself. We actually deny him instead of finding him right where he is.

When we come along side those who weep, it often happens that we bring Jesus to them, even if we are not feeling him ourselves. Sometimes all we can do is empathize, and in so doing feel our own spiritual poverty, or at least our own inability to offer comfort. But it is precisely here that Jesus comes. When we are moved, when we dare to weep with those who cry out for comfort, it is then we bring the Savior along. His calming, comforting powers show themselves imperceptibly.

It's amazing how, after one has been together with someone who is troubled in soul for a little while, eyes are dried, the heart lightens, and one feels something good and right – a deep, mutual understanding that takes away the sting. We sense that the risen one is present, calling those who weep by name. We have not been forgotten.

It is wonderful how when two people weep together their very tears bring comfort and healing. The dear Savior is certainly near. He has risen, and for whom? Clearly for us – we who feel desperately alone. Why shouldn't we believe that he is there when we merely cast a glance toward him and have a longing for him? For certainly the Lord knows our names. He knows our thoughts, our troubles, our weaknesses. He does not merely say "brother" or "sister," but calls us by name: "Mary!" He knows us through and through, down to the counting of hairs.

How comforting it is to know that the very highest one, he who ascended from the cross up to the throne of God, is closest of all to those of us who despair of comfort. We are not too small, too weak, or too sinful for him. He is our brother and loves us. And when such a brother rules over us, who can still despair? If we believe it, we will have the risen one with us with all his love, mercy, and power.

Johann Christoph Blumhardt (1805–1880) was a Lutheran pastor and a key figure of German Pietism. Early in life it was clear to him that his life was to be used by God. Blumhardt studied theology in Tübingen and, after a brief term as executive for a missionary society, became pastor in Möttlingen, an obscure village of Württemberg, southern Germany.



Rivers do not drink their own water...

A beautiful message from Holy Father Pope Francis:

"Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is...Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you."

Let us all remember then that every changing colour of a leaf is beautiful and every changing situation of life is meaningful, both need very clear vision. So do not grumble or complain, let us instead remember that Pain is a sign that we are alive, Problems are a sign that we are strong and Prayer is a sign we are not alone!!

If we can acknowledge these truths and condition our hearts and minds, our lives will be more meaningful, different and worthwhile"

Recently deceased

Frank Quinn, Pembroke Road, Dublin and formerly of Limehill, Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone passed away peacefully at his home on April 9th 2020.

MASS TIMES

As it is now clear that our present situation will endure for several weeks to come, St Mary's will remain closed for liturgical celebrations. However, Mass will continue to be broadcast daily at 10am on our streaming and at 11am each Sunday.

See www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie