

The Scandal of Believing: Mary Magdalene, our Easter Hero

Easter Reflection by Brian Wigger

Easter confronts us with the greatest challenge of them all; faith in darkness. Just because we know that what we are doing is right does not mean that it will be easy. It certainly does not mean that even our best efforts will prevail, nor does it mean that what we live for will happen in our lifetime.

Mary Magdalene is our model. She was one of the women who, according to the Gospels, *"followed Jesus supporting Him out of their own substances."* She banked her whole life on the fact that the vision of Jesus would come to fulness.

She believed in Him and everything He believed in. She believed in the Beatitudes. She believed that the curing of cripples was more important in time than even the celebration of the Sabbath. She believed in women as He did and in the poor as He did and in the reform of the synagogue as He did. She believed in Him first before anyone else, and she followed Him to the end, even when all the others had disappeared.

She followed Him in the light, finally, like the rest of us, she followed Him in darkness. She went to the tomb, to the place where it was clear that failure lay. But she went in the faith that what had come to life in her because of Him, even if suppressed in the world around her for a while, could not die. Not in those who had been touched by Him. Never in her.

It was then that she found Him risen. Gone. Beyond the grasp of those living in whom there was no life and who had wanted him dead so that their own death-dealing could go on.

The message to us is a clear one. When we follow Jesus, the path is often through darkness to what looks to the world-to us- like failure and defeat. But when we ourselves carry the message of Jesus - when we live the life of Jesus here and now, when we, too, confront the world around us with the blessedness of the poor, those outcast, the addicted ones, those migrants and foreigners, those women, those voiceless for whom Jesus gave His life - we carry within ourselves the promise of new life. We live the ongoing message of the Resurrection itself: What comes in the name of Jesus will not die. The darkness will not overcome it as long as we ourselves never blow out the light of Truth in our hearts. ALLELUIA!

Happy Easter, Blessed Passover, Happy Spring, everyone!