

Easter Sunday

John 20:1-9

HOMILY

That ‘very early in the morning’ is dominated by a series of marathons!

We certainly have a clear ‘Action Picture’ of the ‘Easter jog!’

Firstly we have Mary Magdalene running away from the tomb in search of Simon Peter who at this stage is in hiding but also in search of the disciple that Jesus loved.

Mary Magdalene is on the run because what she sees makes believe that *‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb’*. For her, the body of Jesus had been stolen! Evidence at hand? The stone has been rolled away.

We have a beautiful image of what Mary Magdalene saw in front of the altar this year: thanks to Malcom Garner Urged by Anne.

Then we have a counter marathon – this time a real race – in the direction of the tomb. It is a race between Peter and the disciple Jesus loved starting off together. They ran to gather evidence and verify that the body of Jesus is not in the tomb. The beloved disciple runs faster than Peter - reaching the tomb first. He looks in to see the cloths lying on the ground, but he does not go in. Meanwhile as he waits for Peter, he has space to take it all in and make sense of it. Grumpy Peter arrives and, true to his character goes straight in and sees the cloths, and that’s it!

When the Beloved Disciple goes in and sees the same evidence, he believes! He sees more than discarded cloths; he sees with the eyes of faith what this means. His, after all, is a love that sees through the dark. No matter both Peter and the beloved disciple see the same evidence at the same time of the day, yet they perceive different realities.

After all there is a big contrast between them three:

Mary Magdalene confronted with the stone rolled away sees foul play: Body removed.

Peter sees no more than discarded pieces of cloths: doesn’t get bothered.

Yet John sees miles beyond the pieces of cloths, miles beyond the stone rolled away: He believes!

John is presented as the ideal follower of Jesus.

- After all he is the one who is closest to him at the Last Supper,
- and he is the one who stands at the foot of the cross when he dies.
- He is not only the Beloved Disciple but the Loving Disciple.
- One who approaches life from the perspective of love.

Even in running to the tomb on Easter morning, he is driven by love: it is the urgency of his love that gets him there first.

The sensitivity of his love makes him the first to believe. His is a love that sees through the dark.

In Paul’s phrase, *“if love can persuade”* it can get you to the point quicker!