

April 1, 2018
The Ultimate Transformation: Resurrection
Jesus Has Left The Building...

First Reading ~ *Mark 16:1-8*

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they could anoint Jesus. And very early, just after sunrise on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, and had already been rolled back.

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young person sitting at the right, dressed in a white robe. They were alarmed. But the youth reassured them: “Do not be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. Now go and tell the disciples and Peter, ‘Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee, where you will see him just as he told you.’”

They made their way out and fled from the tomb bewildered and trembling. But they said nothing to anyone because they were so afraid.

Second Reading ~ *from Father Richard Rohr in “Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life”*

The very first sign of a potential hero's journey is that he or she must leave home, the familiar. If you have spent many years building your particular tower of success and self-importance—your personal “salvation project,” as Thomas Merton called it—or have constructed your own superior ethnic group, religion, or “house,” you won't want to leave it. Once you can get “out of the house,” your “castle” and comfort zone, much of the journey has a life—and death—of its own. The crucial thing is to get out and about, and into the real and bigger issues. In fact, this was the basic plotline of the founding story that created the three monotheistic religions, with Yahweh's words to Abraham and Sarah: “Leave your country, your family, and your father's house, for the new land that I will show you” (Genesis 12:1). We seem to have an amazing capacity for missing the major point—and our own necessary starting point along with it.

Jesus scandalously talks about this in several places, like Luke 14:26 (“If any one comes to me without leaving his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple”). I always wonder what so-called “family values” Christians do with shocking lines

like that. Jesus was not a nuclear family person at all, not by any common definition.

When he calls his first disciples, Jesus is talking about further journeys to people who are already happily settled and religiously settled. Again, it is very surprising to me that so many Christians who read the Scriptures do not see this. Yet maybe they cannot answer a second call because they have not yet completed the first call and task. Unless you build your first house spiritually well, you will never leave it. To build your house well is, ironically, to be nudged beyond its doors.