

August 2020

Summer Sermon Series:

Missing Persons & One Line Sermons

Missing Persons: Joanna Sacrifice, Risk, and Devotion

August 16, 2020

First Reading ~ *Luke 8:1-3*

Now soon after this (dining with a Pharisee named Simon when a woman of 'low reputation' washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and dried them with her hair), Jesus journeyed through the towns and villages proclaiming the Good News of God's Reign. With Jesus went the Twelve, as well as some women he had healed of evil spirits and some sicknesses; Mary of Magdala, from whom he had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Herod's Steward, Chuza; Suzanna; and many others who were contributing to the support of Jesus and the Twelve with their own funds.

Second Reading ~ *Luke 24: 1-11*

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, the women came to the tomb bringing the spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled back from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of Jesus. While they were still at a loss over what to think of this, two figures in dazzling garments stood beside them. Terrified, the women bowed to the ground. The two said to them, "Why do you search for the Living One among the dead? Jesus is not here; Christ has risen. Remember what Jesus said to you while still in Galilee – that the Chosen One must be delivered into the hands of sinners and be crucified, and on the third day would rise again." With this reminder, the words of Jesus came back to them. When they had returned from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and the others. The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. The other women with them also told the apostles, but the story seemed like nonsense, an idle tale, and they refused to believe them.

Third Reading ~ *adapted from Brené Brown in "Daring Greatly: How The Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the way we Live, Love, Parent, and Lead"*

There is no question that engagement requires sacrifice, but that's what we signed up for. I struggle with that too. But Jimmy Grace, a priest from our Episcopal church, recently gave a sermon about the nature of sacrifice and it totally shifted how I think about it. He explained that in its original Latin form, sacrifice means to make sacred or to make holy. I wholeheartedly believe that when we are fully engaged, regardless of how imperfect, vulnerable, and messy it is, we are creating something sacred.