

## **April 21, 2019 Easter Sunday**

### ***Where In The World...?***

#### **Ancient Reading ~ Luke 24:1-12**

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 the tomb, they didn't 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 did not believe them. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. He stooped down, but he could see nothing but the wrappings. So he went away, full of amazement at what had occurred.

#### **Second Reading ~ from Joan Chittister in *"Easter Calls Us To Resurrection – Our Own"***

The old news about Easter is that it is about resurrection. The new news may be that it is not so much about the resurrection of Jesus as it is about our own. Unfortunately, we so often miss it. Jesus, you see, is already gone from one tomb. The only question now is whether or not we are willing to abandon our own, leave the old trappings behind and live in the light of Jesus, the Christ, whom the religious establishment persecuted and politicians condemned. It is the greatest question of them all ...

The resurrection to which Easter calls us — our own — requires that we prepare to find God where God is by opening ourselves to the world around us with a listening ear. That means that we must be prepared to be surprised by God in strange places, in ways we never thought we'd see and through the words of those we never thought we'd hear. We must allow others — even those whom we have till now refused to consider — to open our hearts to things we do not want to hear. We must release the voice of God in everyone, everywhere. It means putting down the social phobias that protect us from one another. It requires that we clean out of our vocabulary our contempt for "liberals," our frustration for "radicals" and our disdain for "conservatives." It presumes that we will reach out to the other — those different from us... (whomever is different from you...

gays... lesbians... bi folk... immigrants... trans... gender non-binary people... people of color... strangers... prisoners... poor... ) — in order to divine what visions to see *with* them, what cries to cry *for* them, what stones to move from the front of *their* graves as well as our own.

That will, of course, involve listening to women for a change, seeing angels where strangers are, emptying tombs, contending with Pharisees and walking to Emmaus with strangers crying “Hosanna” all the way.

... Easter is not simply a day of celebration: It is, as well, a day of decision. What is really to be decided is whether or not we ourselves will rise from the deadening grip of this world's burnt-out systems to the light-giving time of God's coming again-- this time in us.