EASTER SUNDAY 2018

Hello. This is Bishop John LeVoir with a reflection for Easter Sunday.

On the first Easter Sunday, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb of Jesus early in the morning, while it was still dark outside. She saw that the huge stone was rolled back from the tomb and that the tomb was empty.

“So, she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, ‘They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him’.”

The empty tomb must have shocked Mary Magdalene. Like so many others, she had heard the predictions of Jesus that he would rise from the dead. But, she could not have understood what that meant. Someone “Rising from the dead” on his own power was not part of human experience. Once a person was dead, he or she remained dead. Not so with Jesus.

St. John tells us that Mary wept and wept because she thought that someone had taken Jesus’ body. The body of Jesus was precious to her because it had expressed the love of God for her, despite her many and serious sins. It was through the body of Jesus that Mary received the forgiveness of her sins. Consequently, one can understand why Mary would want to give the body of Jesus a decent burial.

In the midst of her weeping by the empty tomb, Mary saw Jesus, but thought that he was the gardener. However, when he called her by name, she responded with great relief. The word of Mary when she saw the resurrected Christ almost leaps off of the page of the Bible.

“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni,’ which means Teacher.” At that point, she must have begun to understand and believe in Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.

By the testimonies of Mary Magdalene and so many others, as well as the empty tomb, we believe in Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. Let us call out to him: “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher.