



The Women encounter the risen Christ.

Painting from the MAFA Projects.

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-processquery.pl>

These paintings were produced in a collaboration between Mafa Christians in northern Cameroon and French missionaries. The paintings that resulted from this partnership were western in style, but depicted the Mafa and their environment accurately so that the Mafa could identify with the biblical stories being portrayed.

Fifth Station: Jesus meets the women

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in him shall never die. Alleluia.

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

Matthew 29. 9,10

Reflection

What a roller coaster of emotions these women who are met by the resurrected Christ have been through.

From the joy of Palm Sunday to the desolation of the cross on Good Friday and now this!

Good Friday was supposed to be the end of it all. Despite its horror, at least Good Friday was an *end*. The women could return to their normal lives, friends could mourn and life would once again become routine, ordinary.

Every Easter we find ourselves at a particular moment in our lives. This Easter has been unique for all of us and I suspect we are all dealing with a roller coaster of emotions. And like these women leaving the tomb, we are afraid, afraid of what is and what might be.

However, Easter day is the day that changes every day. The appeal of Jesus had been that he was larger than life – and now we discover that he's larger than death.

Crucifixion; a sword in the side; a stone sealing his body in the darkness of a tomb. God cannot be defeated by puny efforts to decide that his Son is dead. None of it matters. God calls Jesus back into life – to bring his life and new possibility to all who put their faith in him. With God, everything is possible.

What we celebrate during this Easter season isn't a 'get out of jail free' card. It doesn't allow us to skip past pain or be sheltered from suffering. But when we've had enough, and would rather stay in a tomb of our own despair, God tugs us back into life.

God asks: "Bring me whatever you have – even if it looks and feels like death: and I will call it back into life".

Prayer

We praise you and we bless you, our risen Lord Jesus, King of glory, for your simple word of greeting made the hearts of the women leap with joy. Speak your word of love to those whose hearts are broken, that they too may hear your loving, beckoning call. To you, Lord Jesus, whose call summons us to life in all its fullness, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus: Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life: Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Music

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
such a Way, as gives us breath;
such a Truth, as ends all strife;
such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
such a Light, as shows a feast;
such a Feast, as mends in length;
such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
such a Joy, as none can move;
such a Love, as none can part;
such a Heart, as joys in love.

Words George Herbert (1593–1633) • *Music* Richard Lloyd (b. 1933)