



Easter: A Time to Listen to Women's Voices

Mark's gospel, the earliest of the four New Testament accounts of Jesus' life, ends on a strange, almost anti-climatic note.

'Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.'

On Sunday morning three women go to the tomb where Jesus' dead body was laid just a couple of days earlier. The tomb is empty. A mysterious figure tells them that Jesus has risen and that he will meet with his friends on their home turf in Galilee. Then, it seems, the trail runs cold.

Why were the women afraid to say something? Perhaps they were overwhelmed by all they'd experienced in such a short period. Maybe they were concerned about how this news would be received. One of the other gospels tells us that when the women did eventually share their story with Jesus' male apostles it was dismissed as idle chatter. Nonetheless, as the history of the past two thousand years testifies, this world-changing news got out anyhow.

Recent events in our national life have reminded us how we still fail to listen to women's voices. That is especially true when the news they bring is unexpected or when it threatens to disturb a status quo that serves mostly male interests. Still the news seems to get out anyhow – and perhaps there is something of God in that.

The good news of Easter is this: the God of Jesus Christ not only listens to but also empowers women's voices. He gives them good news to share about a King who came to pull down the mighty from their thrones and raise up the humble in their place. He frees them to speak of a Saviour whose love is stronger than death and who offers us forgiveness for our failures at the cost of his life. He invites all of us, female and male, poor and rich, young and old, to join our voices with them and proclaim 'Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!'

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