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Easter Day

## He Lives!

*“Why search among the dead for One who lives?”*

Remember...Paul ... 1 Corinthians 15:3-7: earliest recorded tradition of Resurrection --- mentions neither the empty tomb or women's presence --- BUT both of these are important to all the Evangelists none more than Luke...

Women's witness is verified by the 2 on the Road to Emmaus and their story is confirmed by others who visit the tomb and found it just as they said. ...

(Ministry of women is proven to be most faithful over and over again --- This week -- Lenten Luncheons – 50-6- of our women provided for the community)

An empty tomb in and of itself does not present a persuasive argument for the resurrection; The burden of the Christian proclamation was on the experience of the risen Christ by his followers, as Luke was to say later:

“Jesus life and death all of you know, but that God raised him from the dead, “of that we are all witnesses.””

Empty tomb + witnesses strengthened impact of Church's proclamation ...

Empty tomb supported very important point that the one raised was the crucified and buried Jesus. The Church from the beginning has refused to allow resurrection to be interpreted in totally subjective terms. Matters of faith are never finally proven ...

Faith is communicated by witness!

The one raised from the dead said to his followers, “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see”. This means the tomb was empty.

The women the “they” mentioned had already witnessed the crucifixion and burial as well as now the empty tomb. These women of Galilee are thoroughly qualified witnesses, lacking only the experience of the risen Christ.

Luke brings those on the fringe to center stage as we learn about the women, three named + “others”, They are mildly reprimanded for “searching among the dead for one who lives.” The messengers help them remember what Jesus had told them in Galilee, that he would be betrayed, crucified, and on the third day raised. This brief creedal formula lies at the center of the proclamation that was to produce repentance and forgiveness of sins.

Important: Men said “he told you” and that the women “remembered his words” (v.8)

#### Four Points:

1. Galilee belongs to the preparatory past. Jesus, in Luke's accounting is not 'going back to Galilee' but rather the locus has changed to Jerusalem, the center of Christ's appearances, for the commissioning and empowering of disciples and for the mission of the Church to the world. "For our own Zion..."
2. The text assumes that Christ had told the women that he would be betrayed, crucified, and raised. This places the women in the inner circle of disciples. This enlargement of the circle of disciples prepares Luke for the writing of Acts in which those gathered in prayer and awaiting the Holy Spirit includes the eleven, Mary the mother of Jesus, his family and the women, all together about 120 people. The special experiences with Christ and the Holy Spirit do not occur with the apostles alone. You and I are not merely observers but are participants this day in the story of the Church made up of believers, both men and women.
3. In Luke the women are not commanded to go and tell the disciples for they are not errand runners but are rather disciples,. While it is true they told the eleven and others it was out of excitement and fulfillment not command.
4. The faith and witness of the women consisted of three elements: the discovery of the empty tomb, the word of the two messengers, and their remembrance of the words of Jesus. Remembering Jesus words is sometimes overlooked but it is confirmed in our experience. After the resurrection, disciples remembered and understood. The two at Emmaus experienced Christ in the breaking of bread and then remembered what Jesus had said on the road. Faith does not usually move from promise to fulfillment but from fulfillment to promise. REMEMBERING is often the activating of the power of recognition. The story of Jesus and the Church is crucial. It is those times of remembering who and whose we are that will make all the difference.

We are a people based on a life lived and given. The Resurrection of Jesus from the dead is God's ultimate testimony that the worst thing that can happen is never the last thing.

Easter proclaims that the final thing, the last act, belong to the Lord of love, who refuses not to love. Only God's love reigns. Easter means God reigns!

Paul writes: "God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. (5:8)

Friday was the darkest day of the world but today is the BEST DAY of world history. Embrace it! Believe it! Proclaim it!