

Saturday 11th April



## Mary Magdalene

Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?'  
Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.'  
Jesus said to her, 'Mary!'  
She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher).

[John 20:15-16]

No, you aren't imagining it – we are back with Mary Magdalene. Mary walked with Jesus through the crucifixion and burial, but that wasn't the end of her story with Jesus. According to the gospel of John, Mary is the first to meet the risen Christ, though she doesn't recognise him until he calls her name. The other gospels also confirm that Mary Magdalene was one of the women to go to the tomb on that first Easter morning.

As a woman, her testimony would not have held much weight, which is one of the many reasons why it is remarkable that it is recorded that she is the first witness of the resurrection. We know little about what happened to her after her encounter in the garden, but the experience would have changed her life. It is likely she was a dedicated member of the early church, perhaps even a leader.

There is a hymn I often sing on Easter day which sounds sombre in the verse before bursting forth with joy at the chorus: 'Led like a lamb to the slaughter' by Graham Kendrick. The second verse speaks of Mary's encounter in the garden with Jesus, and it always helps me to consider her fear, her surprise, and her burst of joy when she recognised Jesus.

*God of resurrection,  
the long wait in darkness and fear is over.  
You have burst from the tomb,  
filling the world with your resurrection light,  
bringing hope to all who live in despair,  
joy to those who live in sorrow,  
and peace to those who life in strife.  
This Easter, fill us with your resurrection hope  
that we too may bring peace, joy and hope  
to the world around us.  
Amen*