

## *The Resurrection and Heaven*

### **Questions and Texts for Examination and Reflection**

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" 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, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her (John 20:1-13).

As you now prepare for your priestly ordination, my prayer for you is that you let Jesus mould you so much in His likeness so that He can live His life through you and in you and share His passion with you. And let us remember that the passion of Christ ends always with the joy of the Resurrection of Christ. Put your hand in Mary's hand and let her be a Mother to you so that she can help you to become a holy priest (excerpt of letter of Mother Teresa, April 1994).

Is my concept of Heaven reconcilable with what God has revealed? Is there something erroneous about my understanding of Heaven? Where do I get my understanding of Heaven from? *Touched by an Angel? Embraced by the Light? My Catholic Faith?*

Am I conscious of Heaven already begun in me? Am I treasuring the interior Divine Presence of the Trinity in my soul? Am I "holding on" to it? Am I nourishing it? Am I trying to respond to grace so that the intensity of heaven within will increase in me? How might I change?

Do I see the gift of Baptism also as a task? Do I desire to be holy? To be a saint? When will I begin my pursuit? What must change now? What is happening now that is helpful and good?

Do I meditate upon Heaven? Why or why not? How has this helped/hindered me in my pursuit of holiness?

Where is "home" for me? Here or Heaven? Do I make my daily decisions based upon my ultimate goal of Heaven? The way I behaved today, is it in accord with my ultimate end? Has it caused me to move closer to my ultimate goal of Heaven? Why or why not?

What makes me tick? What drives me? Is it worldly ambition, success, honor, wealth, carnal pleasures, power, comfort, leisure? Or is it the possession of God in Heaven? Are my hopes natural or supernatural? Do I easily sputter in the sight of sufferings and natural hopelessness? Have I tried in faith to turn to my hope for Heaven?

Do I realize that my glory in Heaven will be proportionate to my personal sanctity at death? How might this change the way in which I now pursue the spiritual life? What am I going to do about it?

Am I a man or woman of joy? Is there a lack of Christian joy in me? In my family? Why? Is my joy attractive to others? Has heaven begun in me? Am I watchful and ready always to run to my brothers and sisters like the Magdalene and exclaim "I have seen the Lord!"?

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