

Easter Day 4.4.21

Galilee - back to the beginning (Mark 16.1-8)

Galilee is described in the Scriptures as "the land of the Gentiles," land covered with darkness.

However, Galilee has a special emotional significance, primarily for the apostles but also for many others Jesus' disciples. It was there in Galilee that it all began for them. It is not only their homeland. It is primarily the place of their first meeting with the Lord.

This is the place where Jesus took his first steps after his Baptism in Jordan. He went to Galilee to bring light into the land of darkness.

Galilee - a place that was shrouded in darkness not only begins to be brightened but also becomes a source of light for others.

It was here that Jesus called his first disciples.

It was there they were blessed with the Lord's love and responded to that love with a warm and open heart. It was there Jesus gave them the Eight Beatitudes at the Sermon on the Mount. It was there where Peter was unsuccessfully trying to walk on water. It was there where Jesus fed the five thousand. It was there where Jesus had turned the water into wine. It was from there that Jesus sent them on their first and subsequent missions. All in Galilee!

Going to Galilee is like going back to your first love, to the beginning of a friendship. It is like the smell of a new spring of life. Such a return always enlivens us and brings out the most precious experiences from our memory.

However, there was a time when Galilee and everything connected with it was blotted out from the hearts of the Lord's disciples. The moment that removed Galilee's beauty from their hearts was the passion, cross and death of Jesus.

That's why, after his resurrection, Jesus will say to the frightened women who come to the tomb: Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers: let them go to Galilee.

Go to Galilee' means go back to our 'roots', rediscovering our identity, the beauty of our baptism, our mission and vision as baptised Christians, to live our faith to the full.

To return to Galilee means, above all, to return to that moment of light with which God's grace touched us.

Go to Galilee' means to see the Risen Lord again and become a brave witness of his resurrection.

Go to Galilee' means to exclaim with renewed enthusiasm: It is the Lord!

Jesus invites us to return - but not to the pompous "Jerusalem" living in the darkness of its legend's pride and self-vanity; but to that simple land which once saw great light; to a land where the simplest of people experienced the holiest Presence of the Lord. Revelation describes this as a return to "primordial love", echoing the Old Testament's great prophets.

And the Apostles returned. Now it's time for us. Do you remember where your Galilee is, a place where you can see the resurrected Lord again? Do you remember it? Galilee does not have to be a place for us. It could be a situation, a frame of mind, or a choice we make.

Do you remember your first real meeting with the Lord? Do you remember that gust of heart, this touch of His presence, with which He touched your heart so much that it seemed to you that you were already in Heaven? Do you remember that moment when you had the feeling that as soon as you turn around, you will see the Lord? Do you remember the Lord's experience in another person? In a smile, a gesture of kindness, utterly unexpected by us? Do you remember that moment when you said your first "yes" to the Lord and left your boat to follow him?

Galilee. The Apostles returned there. Now it's time for us to go to our Galilee, to meet the risen Lord.