

As the Father Has Sent Me, I Am Sending You!

TODAY'S READING: JOHN 20

Early on the first day of the week, the third day after Jesus' death, Mary went to the tomb and found it empty. She quickly reported this to the disciples. They too went and saw the empty tomb. How could this be? Of one of the disciples, John says, "He saw and believed" (verse 8).

Later that evening, Jesus appeared to his gathered disciples and said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (verse 21). What was he sending them to do? To proclaim the Good News that Jesus had taken the punishment for our sins onto himself, but then had risen again on the third day, overcoming sin and death.

The Greek word *euangelion* (in English: Gospel or Good News) was used for the news of victory in a war. Jesus Christ did not accomplish a worldly victory, but a spiritual victory over sin and evil. The news is a message of reconciliation with God and forgiveness of sins for those who accept him into their lives.

A fitting analogy today would be the much longed-for news of the discovery of a vaccine or cure for the coronavirus. Such a discovery would remove many people's fear and anxiety at once. Sin—the failure to live a life that reflects the love of Jesus Christ—is much like a virus, spreading fear and anxiety and overwhelming our hearts and minds with arrogance, anger, jealousy and envy. But the cure is here! It is found in Jesus Christ who died and rose again. So "stop doubting and believe" (verse 28).



Happening Now:

The coronavirus pandemic has awakened a great longing in people's hearts for something more than what the world offers. Google reported that use of the search term "prayer" has skyrocketed since the outbreak, and people whose hearts have been closed to the Gospel are warming up. Jesus sent his disciples to share the Good News, and they went. Today Jesus is sending you; will you go?

Have You Thought About...

- If you read today that a cure for the coronavirus had been found, would you not immediately rejoice and share the news with as many people as you could? The news of Jesus Christ is something greater than that; it does not just save our bodies for this life but saves our souls for eternity. Whom could you tell about the Gospel today?
- Can you feel how Jesus' words "Peace be with you!" (verse 19) enter the disciples' hearts and turn their grief, anxiety, guilt and fear into joy at once? Have you experienced this joy in your heart? If not, or if you have not felt it for a long time, take a moment to pray and ask God to fill your heart with this joy and peace right now.
- Growing in faith is not a sprint, it is a marathon. And it starts with the right habits. Why don't you commit to reading at least one chapter in the Bible every day? You will be surprised by the change that occurs in your life.