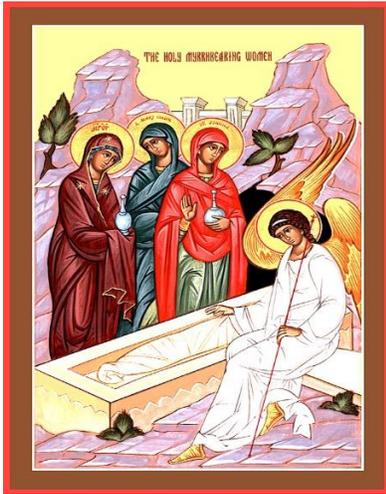


Who Will Roll Away the Stone for Us?



On Easter Sunday morning the women were on their way to perform their last work of love for Jesus. Expecting to find him lifeless, they were to anoint his body with sweet-smelling spices. Worrying about the massive stone they were sure that they would find at the entrance of the tomb, they said to one another, “*Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?*” (Mark 16:3)

The huge stone sealing the tomb of Jesus impresses us. For we, too, meet with many such challenging stones in life: stones that block our doorway into the future, the stones of sin, sickness, sorrow, loneliness, war, and ultimately death.

Like St. Paul we cry out, “*Who will deliver me from this body of death?*” (Romans 7:24) We think of the great stones that stand in our way: the regrets for the way we have often taken in the past, the uncertainties that plague us this moment, the fears that are in our hearts concerning things to come, and we cry, “*Who will deliver us? Who will roll away the stone for us?*”

Now the women find that the stone to the entrance of the tomb had been rolled back. It has been removed in the way that they had not foreseen. In the book *Jesus: A Dialogue with the Saviour* a monk of the Eastern Church writes: “*In order to remove the stone, nothing less than a cataclysm was necessary. A push, a slight readjustment would not be enough. Likewise, the stone which seems to immobilize and paralyze Jesus in my soul can be taken away only by an earthquake, that is to say, by a violent interior revolution, by a complete and radical change. A jolt like lightning is required to unsettle me. Jesus rises from the dead in me only if the one who I was ceases to exist, giving way to the new human. Not a retouching or a tuning up will do; but a death and birth are necessary.*”

Friends of Jesus, death is never the end of the story. It is not the end for the infant who dies at such a tender age. It is not the end for that loved one whose life is ravaged by cancer or snuffed out by a failing heart. It is not the end for that young soldier killed in the prime of his youth fighting for peace in Ukraine. It is not the end; for the stone has been rolled away.

As we approach the Feast of all Feasts - the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I hope and pray that you and your families are in good health. Let us always remember that we are connected as One Body in Christ. Our love in Christ is forever!

The grace of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Christ is Risen! – Indeed, He is Risen!
ECSD Chaplain
Fr. Julian Bilyj