



APRIL 12, 2020

LOVE FIRST, FIRST LOVE

WEEK DEVOTIONAL BASED ON SUNDAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS 9:00AM AT
WWW.FIRSTLUTHERAN-BARRON.ORG OR ON THE RADIO 97.7FM

Mark 16:1-8 (NIV)

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3 and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 6 "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" 8 Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God,
you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CRISIS

Crisis is an event where life is changed.
Christ was betrayed, crucified, and died.

Crisis is an event that leaves us changed
Faith in Christ changes shapes our values and thus us. The women left the tomb filled with fear and told no one...that is until they did tell others. Mark is, after all, writing their account!

Our faith is built on crisis

The blood of the cross. The empty tomb.
Christians have hope in the midst of hardship because our faith strengthens us to value things greater than any crisis can impact.

REFLECTION

PASTOR RON MATHEWS

Today's Gospel begins by announcing: "the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1); and ends in fear and silence: "So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid" (16:8).

Mark's Gospel began with hope, promise, and anticipation. Yet, it ends with tension of unanswered questions, bewilderment, and fear. The women hear the good news of the resurrection, but it doesn't register in their thoughts. They see the empty tomb, but don't believe Christ is risen. They leave telling no one what happened...that is until they do.

Mark ends his Gospel in crisis. A Crisis is an event where life as you knew it is changed. What was normal will never be again.

A crisis is an event that leaves us changed because it has impacted what matters most in our lives, our values. Values are our anchors in life, they help us make decisions and cope with life's changes. As the world around us changes, the values of our faith are what keep us steady and enables us to adapt to a new normal.

Christians excel at speaking into crisis with hope and comfort because our faith is built on crisis. The entire Word of God is based entirely on a series of crisis events from war, enslavement, victories, suicide, genocide, infanticide, blindness, paralysis, deafness, muteness, addiction, hopelessness, mental illnesses, every possible hardship a person could possibly experience is found in scripture. This is our faith. This is the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God - the promise and hope that we have in the midst of life's burdens. It is because we have this hope that we excel where the world flounders not because we have some form of immunity that prevents things from happening to us, but because we are able to address how a crisis affects us on the inside. Our values are built around the immutable values of God found in Christ on the cross and that empty tomb.

