



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Sermon

Earth, home to all of us, a beautiful place where there is diversity in creation, where God's glory is reflected and the work of His hands is announced. The human being as part of God's work is all over the Earth living in different ecosystems which change and transform. Our big house continues spinning, putting up with the damage inflicted on it, the Earth suffers, it transforms and **continues supported on the same axis.**

Our world is divided by geographical borders, and in each of them human beings are going through emotions, feelings and experiences that one way or another connect us as part of a single family, humanity. Just like Earth humanity changes, transforms itself, hurts itself, and for it to turn to the right direction **it must do it on the axis of the resurrection.** Our society is **turning without the axis of the Risen One**, turning on its own thoughts with a selfish consciousness which dilutes and segregates, which divides us as nations, and goes on turning, connecting through technological networks but at the same time disconnecting while distracted in front of a screen.

Over and over again we perceive inequalities and injustices, created both by the oppressed and the oppressors who, confused in their own goals, distance themselves from each other, without realizing that both are worthy of an encounter with the Risen One. The Risen One seeks them out to heal them and renew their lives through forgiveness and reconciliation.

Luke's story brings us **a first element** in which he presents the women who come from Galilee making an effort, despite their sadness, to go to the tomb to perfume the body that for them embodied justice. They find that the stone has been rolled away and they are speechless; they did not know what to make of this. They were surprised when two men in gleaming bright clothing stood beside them. And, do you know what the women did before them? They bowed their faces toward the ground. Those women represented the pain of a nation hurt by the power of an empire that crushed those who challenged it; they were used to being marginalized, and they bowed their heads in front of men.

But these men empower them with the power of the word, reminding them of what was said in Galilee, "It is necessary that the Son of Man be delivered into the hands of sinners, be crucified, and on the third day rise again". Listening to those words awoke in them the impetus to emulate the Savior and defy the times. **Just as it did with these women, the resurrection causes each of those who seek Jesus to look up. It makes us leave the pain aside and continue to be part of those who defy the times and raise their eyes because hope is not found on the ground.** It urges us not to stop in the face of the grief that wants to paralyze us, but to raise our eyes to a new season where life's challenges and complications *present themselves and are faced creating* new voices, new systems and new ways of spreading the Gospel. **Let us resurrect hope so that we do not become prisoners of traditions but instead we rise excited and allowing ourselves to listen to the diverging speeches of children, youth, and adults who invite us to live the same faith,** temper the reality in which we live, adding and not subtracting. **The Risen One invites us to renew our collective consciousness of faith and to move to a new participation in life!** Each time we raise our eyes we affirm the faith that is revealed in the resurrection; each time we raise our eyes we become part of a rebuilding of conscience that contributes to a more just society. Those women's actions made a difference; in them, faith caused the spreading of the message of salvation. Each of us must walk straight, acknowledging the power of resurrection, **contemplating God in the unknown and believing.** It is necessary for the **Church to find the Risen One,** for us to return strength and hope to a suffering world. The resurrection is not reduced to the reanimation of a body as it happened with Lazarus; instead, it presents a transformation into a new life. Let us walk toward this new way of living validating those who are excluded and homogenizing society, not to turn human beings into exact copies of one another, but to understand them from their peculiarities and strengthen one another from our differences. **The resurrection wants to raise the eyes of the Church that heralds and lives justice,** that demands that rights not be written out in a Universal Declaration but that they be propagated in **actions.** **The more people transmit the passion of the Risen One, the more people will commit to being part of that community that has a renewed awareness and aspires to the common good.** Just like social discourses have been used to marginalize, **they can be re-written** to promote a culture of peace and harmony across humanity. Paulo Freire said "Education does not change the world; it changes people who will change the world". Let us educate from faith, tearing down insensitivity and selfishness barriers that only serve a small group. Let us teach how to live walking toward Jesus experiencing the transformation generated by the resurrection.

A **second element** teaches us that resurrection starts to reveal itself in Galilee, where there were injustices, immoralities and heavy burdens imposed by political and religious powers. Men and women followed Jesus from there. It is through women that it encourages us to listen to the silenced voices; it presents in the resurrection the inclusion of all [human beings] in the Project of Jesus. Throughout the Gospel of Lucas we are presented with the dilemma of shame and honor. The women, because they were such, were supposed to feel shame and align with what was established by a patriarchal world. However, from the first chapter we find Jesus giving their honor back to them, giving a voice to women like Elizabeth and Mary, and it ends with mentioning these three, who followed Him from Galilee and became the first witnesses of the resurrection. Brave and defiant women who empowered themselves and announced to others what they had seen. Nowadays the Church's credibility has diminished because abuses have been committed while using God's name. However, the resurrection invites us to renew our collective consciousness of faith and to move to a new participation in life. A consciousness of faith that includes everyone who wants to receive the revelation of the Risen One, without minding gender, social status, or personal appearance. It challenges us to be compassionate, to forget limits that we created, and to allow lives to find in Jesus's message the love, forgiveness, consolation, and salvation they need. The time for indifference and seclusion ends when we move ahead to follow Him and embody the announcement of the living hope that places justice and the common good in a privileged place and as an aspiration in life.

Resurrection is also the believer's axis, **it must move us to go** as these women went to the eleven and to everyone else; perhaps knowing they would not be believed, nevertheless the women told them and, even though they were not believed, they were able to raise suspicion and the desire to find out by themselves what had happened. And that is how we must spread and fulfill the mission of going around the world preaching the Gospel, not waiting to be immediately believed, but planting the seed that will move others to seek Jesus and to find the miracle of the resurrection that will make them go home and say, in wonder, ***He has risen!***

Let us not stay in seclusion observing the empty tomb; **let us get out of the temple, start new projects, go back to the mission that takes us to find our fellow human being who needs strength and a new life.** Let us recognize that life is more than rotating on an axis like Earth does; let us rotate on the axis of the Risen One so that, even in adversity, we can announce: Immanuel God with us, do not let the tomb that wants to make us believe that we are

unprotected silence us; do not let the voices that scream that we were defeated silence us; do not let the news of illness lock us in; in the face of life's unexpected turns, let us remember that resurrection is the believer's axis, that it makes us more than victors through the One who loved us. **Let us shed the collective consciousness that invites us to hold on to the empty tomb as the finality, and let us live the resurrection by announcing the living hope with joy and courage.** Let us challenge the times that want to challenge the Good News; let us aspire to create a community that opens its heart to live the mission. The Risen One invites us to renew our collective consciousness of faith and to move to a new participation in life.

Today we ask ourselves, "Where is my Galilee?", "Which injustice am I experiencing in my Galilee?", "Who oppresses me?" Today our Galilees face economic and health crises that have distanced people, have created new fears, and have also made us identify with another person's pain, losses and hopelessness. In the face of this disconcerting scenario, the Risen One manifests Himself to us to make us more aware. In the face of the pandemic as a crushing empire, let us respond as witnesses to the call of the resurrection that makes us resist, go on, and announce a full life in the axis of the resurrection.

Let us walk toward Galilee. Leonard Boff said that **"We are all headed toward Galilee so we can see Him face to face."** Let us awake in a new spiritual state that makes us offer the miracle of the resurrection in our Galilees. Let us open our hearts to the love that is represented in the fulfillment of the resurrection, Jesus lives!. Let us forget the defeated idea that makes us look to the ground or to the empty tomb; let us find the Risen One guiding us and encouraging us to receive the strength of the Holy Spirit to expand His Kingdom.

What does the Risen One want to offer me? What does the Risen One expect from me?

The Risen One offers us a renovation of our collective consciousness of faith and expects us to move toward our Galilee guided by Him, to a more just participation in life with a living hope.

The Earth turns on its axis and we will transform our communities turning from the axis of the resurrection. Wherever we are on Earth, let us be a united global community, marveled at the Risen One, supportive and loving.

Let us announce the living hope that places justice and the common good in a privileged place and as an aspiration of life.

Let us pray and walk with others from every corner on Earth; that is how the mystery of the resurrection is uncovered in each of us. Face to face with Jesus, face to face with our fellow human being, let us shout Jesus has risen.

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