

Mark 16:1-8

The Easter Gospel which I just read, did you notice how it ended? “And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” Isn’t this amazing? That the Gospel of St. Mark, which records for us the story of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, should end in this way? Throughout the pages of this Holy Book of the Scriptures we hear how the Word made Flesh lived among us, performed miracles, taught, served; that He suffered under Pontius Pilate for us, that He died and was buried for us, and the third day He rose from the dead. This Gospel leads up to its highest point, to its climax in the account of the Resurrection, and then in the command given to the women to tell Jesus’ disciples to assemble in Galilee where Jesus will meet them—and the last words we hear are, “And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” We could underscore this astounding statement with a triple negative: They said Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow. And that’s the way this book ends.

Can it really be true that this is all? Is this really the ending? It’s where the Revised Standard Version and the New International Version stop. They end in this way, at verse 8 because that’s where some of the oldest Greek manuscripts end. But again I ask, “Is this really the ending?” “They said nothing to anyone.”

Matthew, Luke, John, and Paul tell us that the ending was quite different. The women did tell the disciples that Jesus had risen. Jesus did appear to them in Galilee and at other places. He even appeared to over five-hundred followers at once. And so we can explain Mark’s ending in this way: The women, being frightened, said nothing to anyone until they located the disciples.

But I had a reason for focusing our attention on these words, “They said nothing to anyone.” Because the question is vital for us: Is this the ending that we write to the Gospel that has reached us? Do we say Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow? Or do we Somehow, say Something, to Somebody?

Just how true is it? Check out your family conversation—the explicit parent to parent, parent to children, and children to children conversation throughout the season of Lent and today, on Easter. How many times, in words, did somebody say to anybody, that Jesus suffered and died for us, and that He is risen? For some, many times. For many, some times. Were there times that something could have been said and was not? Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow?

Check out your private devotional life. How many times has our Bible reading, our praying, our meditating said to our family members that Jesus is risen! Jesus is Lord! My Lord and Savior! And how many times has our practice rather said, “He is not here?”

What about art? Think of all the pictures hanging on the walls in your home...the pictures in all the magazines and books that you bring into your home. How many say, “The Lord!” to someone? How many say just the opposite?

If we are in the habit of saying Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow, then the question should be asked, “Are we no longer amazed? Does Jesus and His death and resurrection mean that little to us?”

The women had come to the grave that morning fully expecting to find a sealed tomb. They wondered about the stone—who would roll it away for them? They came out there because of a dead Man...at least they thought He was dead. Their life had very little meaning anymore. But God said something to them. Through His angel He announced that Jesus was alive! And when they heard it, they were too—alive, really alive, because He was risen! It is true that they said nothing to anyone, but they were not speechless. When they found the disciples they told them the good news of the Resurrection.

You did not come here this morning because of a dead man. We would not assemble at sunrise, or at any time, if Jesus was not alive. It would be pointless. Our Easter service has meaning only because He is risen. Every worship service has meaning because Christ rose from the dead and He comes here in Word and Sacrament to meet us.

If your life says Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow, it's not because Easter did not take place. Jesus did truly rise from the grave, and that is the something that God says to you. He announces to you that the stone is not there. Jesus is not dead anymore. And here's the wonderful thing about that—He did it for you. He didn't rise for His own benefit, He rose for you...just as He suffered for you, and died for you, so also He defeated death and the grave for you.

The stone that concerned the women, because it was too heavy for them to move, is gone. And so is the stone of your sin. It's gone! We didn't move it—it was too heavy for us. Jesus pushed it away from your heart because He died and rose for you. And that stone is not going to show up again. Even though you and I keep adding to it...sins upon sins... every day that stone gets heavier with the weight of our wrongdoing. But it's gone! Because Jesus got rid of it! He forgives you. Each one of you He forgives. If Jesus could blast that stone away from His own grave, then no sinful stone of yours is too heavy for Him.

Are you living with a guilty conscience? Have you done things you are ashamed of? Do you feel that there is a wall between you and God? I have good news for you. God says something to you that is amazing! The wall is gone. There is no shame for you anymore. God is greater than your conscience, and He says that everything is okay now. He is at peace with you, because the stone of your sin is gone. Jesus did that for you.

Do you want proof? Then come to His Sacred Meal. Here is where Jesus meets you. Not in Galilee, but in the bread and wine. Your Living Lord meets you here to say something to you. "Be at peace," He says, "Your sins are forgiven." Even if we have been people who have said Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow, Jesus says to you, "I am not angry with you, I forgive you." Even if we have been people who have lived as though Jesus and His resurrection don't mean that much to us, Jesus says to you, "I died and rose again for you because I love you. I don't love you because of what you think of Me, or because of how you live; I love you because you are My dear child. I created you, and I baptized you. And so here in My Sacred Meal I give Myself to you."

God is not One who says Nothing, to Nobody, Nohow. He says what is in His heart. He tells you what He has done for you; that He has saved you from sin and death through your Risen Lord, Jesus Christ. And that is why you, the people of God here in Augusta,

Missouri, can be people who Somehow, say Something, to Somebody. Because Christ is risen! He is risen for you! Alleluia! Amen.