

This Month's Liturgy, July 2018

I will seek him whom my soul loves.

Our proclamation of the Risen Christ must be rooted in first having encountered Him in our own lives, through prayer, through reflection on the Scriptures and through the Sacraments.

On 22nd of this month we keep the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, she who stood at the foot of the Cross, who went to anoint the body in the tomb and to whom the Risen Lord appeared on the Easter Morning, sending her to 'tell my brothers' that he would meet them in Galilee. Pope Francis, in 2016, raised this day to the level of a **FeastDay** precisely to highlight the Magdalene's vocation as 'apostle to the apostles' or as Archbishop Arthur Roche put it "an example of true and authentic evangelisation; she is an evangelist who announces the joyful central message of Easter."

The Scripture which is given to us in the Liturgy of the Feast is a beautiful text from the Song of Songs of the Old Testament which is all about searching and finding and meeting - and surely that lies at the heart of the story of The Magdalene. Her encounter with Jesus transforms her life in such a way that she becomes one who is sent to others, even to the Apostles themselves, to be a herald of the Resurrection.

We don't claim to yet have full and perfect knowledge (*now we see in a glass darkly.... 1 Corinthians 13:12*), or indeed all the answers to all the questions, but what we do have is a certainty, founded in our personal experience, that the meeting with the Risen Christ, the Christ who has promised to be with us always, enriches our lives in so many ways and gives a depth and value to our days.

In one of the parishes in which I have served over these past 30 years they sang a hymn at the end of the school term, the chorus of which was

*Unless you are a seeker,
You'll never be a finder*

How very true !

Canon Philip