

## Meditation

**Adapted from Becca's Prayer**, by Rebecca Angel Maxwell, inspired by the aramaic translation of The Lord's Prayer

Hear us, O Creator,  
Whose breath resounds throughout the universe.  
Open a space deep within where we may attend your Word.  
Come now and guide us on the path  
of nourishment, illumination, and delight  
in the everyday, as it is in the Always.  
Free our fingers from their grasp of hurt, fear, and anger,  
so we may weave a pattern of wholeness  
that shines of your creation.  
Help us to balance self and community,  
for all to taste the sweetness of life.  
You alone hold the music that vibrates  
between and within,  
calling and reminding,  
of the way back home.

## The Ongoing Revelation of Love

*John 20:1-4, 1, 15-16*

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.*

*So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."*

*Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.*

In John's gospel, we're told that Peter and John looked in the tomb, saw that Jesus was not there, and so returned to their homes. **But Mary stood, weeping...**

*Mary Magdalene turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"*

*Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher)*

John Dominic Crossan and Marcus J. Borg. ***The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Final Days in Jerusalem:***

"...focusing on the factuality of these stories often misses their **more-than-factual-meanings**. When treated as if they are primarily about an utterly unique spectacular event, we often do not get beyond the question, 'Did they happen or not?' to the question, 'what do they mean?...' If you believe the tomb was empty, fine; now, *what does this story mean?* If you believe Jesus' appearances [after the resurrection are so accurate that they] could have been videotaped, fine; now, *what do these stories mean?* And if you're not sure about that, or even if you are quite sure it didn't happen this way, fine; now, *what do these stories mean?*"

*What does it mean* that in all four gospel accounts of the resurrection, Mary Magdalene is the **first** to see the Risen Christ— in other gospel accounts, sometimes with other women— but always women who see this revelation?

In the laws of the Roman Empire, a woman could not testify on her own behalf, but required a male relative to advocate for her. The testimony of women didn't count. What if the consistency that the first revelation of the risen Christ is to women is one more sign that the Way of Jesus is radically different from the way of empire?

*What does it mean* that Mary only recognizes the presence of her beloved teacher in **a new form** when she hears her name spoken in love? What does it mean to us, right here, right now, to both SPEAK LOVE and to hear LOVE call our name?

John Philip Newell in ***The Rebirthing of God:***

Carl Young observed that in the Christian Resurrection story the Risen Christ is not found where his body was laid. The story is not about resuscitation. It is about resurrection. It is not about reviving the old form. It is about something new, something we could never have imagined, emerging from death. This is the way of the universe... It is forever finding its new form, forever unfolding into what has never been. This is the way of our souls, our lives, our communities... We are so deeply immersed in collapse, as well as the early stirrings of new birth, that it is difficult to sharply define the characteristics of the new thing that is trying to emerge.

The story of an empty tomb means little without remembering the events that led to the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus taught in his radically inclusive ministry, in words and actions, how to resist both the domination of empire— and the collusion of the powers of the religious with the imperial powers of empire. That subversive teacher ate with the powerless, the marginalized, the oppressed and forgotten ones of his day. He made the “powers that be” afraid of a

revolution, and so he was killed. But the revolution was not one of might– it was one of Love.

Everything– every circumstance, every relationship, every stone we pile on top of our hearts, every emptiness, every fearful event we see unfolding around us daily– EVERYTHING is transformed by love. And love is revealed to us over and over again as the ultimate reality that cracks open our egoic mind with its need for control, for power, for numbing.

There are three symbols from this last week in the life of the historical Jesus: a table where friends gathered to celebrate passover and freedom from oppression; the cross, symbol of Jesus surrendering to his sacred purpose to teach LOVE at all cost; and the empty tomb, our reminder that the Eternal, Universal Christ is the ongoing, ever-present revelation of Love, unlimited by space or time.

WE limit love when we limit who sits at our table, when we refuse to see there is no separation between Spirit or others. We limit love when we are fearful of surrendering to our own sacred purpose. We limit love when we stay entombed in our fears, numb to the call of love that calls us to live fully.

We are called to *empower* love, compassion, forgiveness, peace and justice instead of *holding power over*. When we SEE the living Christ in our present moment, and we SEE the world in its wholeness, and we SEE the Oneness that IS us and all of creation– we still can hold the paradox that our sisters and brothers and the Earth herself are trembling under the weight of empire, of war, of oppression. In that paradox of seeing the table, the cross AND the empty tomb, we are called to a personal transformation, and we are called to a communal transformation.

If we can die to our inner judgements, to our killing thoughts and words directed at ourselves or others, then we will also arise to the renewal of our relationships in our families, in our neighborhoods, in our community and in the world. We rise above our fears, and rise into the deep truth that despite all appearances to the contrary, death does not have the final answer. As we embody the Christ within, Love— not an easy, sentimental, baby chicks and bunnies kind of love— but Love that says yes to whatever is called forth on the journey— that Love continues its ongoing revelation to transform us. Always and in all ways.

**Easter prayer** Steve Garnass-Holmes

Holy One,	tasted or spilled,
Holy Oneness,	it is still water,
Loving Self-Giver,	un-buriable,
	blessing the earth;
I am a clear glass.	it is still love, still you,
You pour yourself into me	still eternal.
until I am all love,	
	Christ. you pour yourself into me.
and I pour my love,	I pour myself out
which is all of myself,	and live beyond myself,
into the world	
	in you, as you,
and the glass is forgotten,	resurrected:
and the water flows out	life eternal.
and wherever it is,	