Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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"Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

**Saint Mark, Evangelist**

*1 Pt 5:5b-14*; *Mk 16:15-20*

Today's Gospel for this Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist is famously called by scholars the "False Ending" or add-on, to the original text, which ends with the women fleeing from the empty tomb and their encounter with a messenger in such a state of consternation that "they tell no one, for they were afraid" (Mark 18:8).

If Mark was in fact the earliest account of the life and death of Jesus, perhaps this sober ending reflects the actual time it took for the mystery of the resurrection to take hold among the early followers of Jesus. More likely, the author knew well that

Jesus had been raised, but withholds the end of the story deliberately to challenge his audience some 30 years later to give their own answer to the questions, " Is Jesus alive among us now?" and "What does this story of Jesus mean for me?"

Are we not in this audience? What difference has Easter made in our lives? What do you believe about the reality of the cross and resurrection of Jesus in your life and in the redemptive mission of the Church?

What challenge is there for us if we think the whole story ends with a tragedy on Friday that is fully resolved by Sunday?  Did the first disciples go through a profound process of transformation and conversion in order to really grasp the mystery of Jesus? And if so, don't we need to enter this same process to know the Gospel we say we believe in?

One clear indication of Mark’s faith is that he begins his Gospel with these words: "Here begins the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."  So, whatever his motives in ending his story so abruptly, he wrote because he was bursting with faith and eager to tell the world what he and his community had experienced.

How we come to that same enthusiasm and commitment to evangelize every creature on earth is the point of his Gospel.  This is the faith journey he is now inviting us to make for ourselves.