RUNNING TO THE EMPTY TOMB INSTEAD OF INDIFFERENCE

Bp. Michał Stobnicki

We hear in today's Gospel something that can be a very instructive lesson for all of us. Note, namely, how Mary Magdalene behaved when she saw the stone rolled away from the tomb, and how Saint Peter and Saint John behaved. When they heard the news of the empty tomb, that is, both Mary Magdalene and the apostles, they ran. They did not walk, they did not stroll, but they ran.

My dear ones, the great problem and misfortune of Catholics in the modern age is our indifference. We have simply become indifferent to the things of God. They have become indifferent to us, and we have become indifferent to them. A great danger, a great snare of Satan. The ancient Romans used to say: *quotidiana vilescunt* – what is daily becomes commonplace. And so the Catholic faith has become commonplace to us, the Holy Mass has become commonplace, the sacraments, even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself has become commonplace to us. And what is commonplace ceases to be respected by man. What is commonplace becomes indifferent to us. It is there, so it is there; it is not there, so it is not. And we see, my dear ones, in recent centuries how this indifference killed the holy Church from within, how it killed the whole Christian Latin civilisation. It was indifference that brought it about that today they rule over us.

When we think of the sorrowful Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, we obviously think also of those who bear the responsibility, the historical responsibility, for that great crime. But on the other hand we must realise that they would not have such great power today were it not for our Catholic indifference. Their hatred of God and of mankind, a demonic hatred of what is of God, of God's Church, is only one part of the problem. The second part, perhaps larger and more serious, is our Catholic indifference. We were indifferent when the Catholic religion was being destroyed and replaced. We were indifferent when the Catholic Holy Mass was being destroyed and replaced. We were indifferent when morality was being destroyed. We were indifferent when history was being falsified. We were indifferent when we were being made into slaves, forced to submit to medical experiments. We were indifferent when they were demoralising our children.

Dear faithful, this Saturday should be a summons for all of us to put an end in our lives to lukewarmness and indifference, and, after the example of Mary Magdalene, after the example of Saint Peter and Saint John, to begin a spiritual run. Not a stroll, not a little saunter, but a spiritual run towards Christ.

THE LORD TAKEN AWAY

Dear faithful, the second matter worth noting is those dramatic words of Saint Mary Magdalene addressed to the apostles. Words that we could repeat today: "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." And we, my dear ones, have been experiencing for several decades the very same feelings that filled the heart of Mary Magdalene. The Lord Jesus has been taken from us out of churches that were once Catholic. This fills our hearts with sadness, with fear, perhaps with horror and despair. We wonder where they have laid Him, where we can find the Saviour today.

And, after the example of the holy apostles, we must run, we must look into the empty tomb. We must, my dear ones, ponder all that Christ entrusted to His apostles. We must use our reason in order to believe. Faith is not a matter of emotions. Faith is an act of reason. And the apostles run to the tomb moved by emotion. Something has happened, the body is gone. They go to that tomb, and what happens then? They look inside. The emotions give way, they begin to think. And what do they see in that empty tomb? "They saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that had been about His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in a place by itself." And what became clear to them then? That Christ had truly risen, that He had not only rolled away that great, heavy stone with which the entrance to the

burial cave was covered, but had gone out, passed, penetrated in a miraculous way through the burial cloths. They were not torn apart, they did not lie in some disorder. Those burial cloths, which had after all stuck to the blood-soaked body of Jesus Christ, lay in order, folded. The body that had been wrapped in them simply passed through them. Christ had truly risen from the tomb. He is not here. The body was not stolen. Jesus Christ simply came out of the tomb.

And this is what the apostles understood, what they grasped when they entered the empty tomb. And that is why Saint John draws attention to those folded cloths and to the napkin that had been about His head, placed apart, because it was a testimony, a tangible testimony that Jesus Christ had truly risen from the dead.

THE BURIAL CLOTHS

Those burial cloths of Jesus Christ are, after all, preserved, kept to this very day. Like a jigsaw puzzle that can be put together, the individual pieces fit one another perfectly. Not only the Shroud of Turin, known to all of us, but the Sudarium of Oviedo, the cap of Cahors, the shroud of Argenteuil, the veil of Manoppello. All these burial cloths, kept in different places, when compared, when their images are laid over one another, match to the millimetre, which indicates that exactly the same person, the same body, was wrapped in them. The wounds in the same places. Scientists make some three-dimensional visualisations. Everything matches. But those same scientists say that the Shroud of Turin is, after all, a forgery painted somewhere in the tenth century. Only not one of them can say how it was painted. Allegedly.

He who has faith, he whose mind is enlightened by the grace of faith, sees and understands. "They saw and believed." They saw the burial cloths, the folded cloths, constituting tangible proof of the resurrection, on which were imprinted both the traces of blood, the traces of the wounds, and, as on the veil of Manoppello, the face of the Risen One. And we, my dear ones, do indeed see the testimonies confirming the Passion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but we are so tainted, so infected with liberalism and modernism, that we do not believe. We are so saturated with this post-conciliar pseudo-religion that we look for a faith based on emotions. You are supposed to feel butterflies in your tummy, to drift off somewhere, to collapse into some spirit, who knows which. That is not, my dear ones, the Catholic religion. Saint Peter and Saint John run to the tomb; they do not clap there, they do not strum on guitars, they do not dance, they have no collapses, they simply went in, saw and believed. God gave you reason for this: that by using it you might find Him, discover Him, find the way to Him, led by the light of faith. And this, my dear ones, is faith. And it is for such a faith that we must pray.

FINDING CHRIST TODAY

So when we hear those dramatic words of Saint Mary Magdalene: "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him," at the same time we realise that we can find Him even in these times, in which it seems to us that the Church of the Lord Jesus is no more. Just as the apostles found Him 2,000 years ago, so we too can find Him today, but not guided by emotions, not guided by an attachment to this or that internet preacher, to some visionary, male or female, to some prayer groups in which some demonic wonders are taking place. We can find Jesus Christ not by relying on emotions, but by using a reason enlightened by the light of faith, which will show us where the Catholic Church is today, which will show us where Jesus Christ is today, His true body, where the Holy Mass is validly and worthily celebrated today. This is possible, my dear ones, for every man. One only has to want to use reason and to want to be led by God's grace.

The Lord has been taken out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him. The Lord Jesus has been taken from us out of the Catholic churches. We do not know where He has been placed. Or perhaps rather we did not know, but we have found Him. But we have found Him, and we desire to tear away, to cast off what was our great guilt, the guilt of us and of earlier generations: indifference. Let us be indifferent no longer, but let us run towards Christ

and after Christ, trusting that we too shall behold the glory of the resurrection, that we too shall become victors over death, hell and Satan. Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.