

THE CENTRE FOR BIBLICAL FORMATION
NOTRE DAME DE SION • JERUSALEM

the bible • the people • the land

***So Mary went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord, and this is what he said to me."
(John 20:14-18)***

May we too, go forth to proclaim: "We have seen the Lord!"

Dear friends of the Centre for Biblical Formation,

As we Christians enter Holy week and the triduum, our thoughts turn to the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. In all four gospels, it is the women who accompany Jesus to his death on the cross and who are the first to report the resurrection. They play a prominent role in the Passion-death-resurrection narratives, and it is Mary Magdalene who is mentioned in each gospel and the first to proclaim: "We have seen the Lord." The focus on these gospel women led me to reflecting on the plight of women and how we can proclaim good news in a country torn apart by war. My thoughts focused on the women hostages, women who have lost sons and daughters in the present conflict, the women and children of Gaza, and all women in areas of conflict around the world who are the victims of immense suffering and death. The UN released the following statistics of women in Gaza: 9,000 women have been killed since October, an average of 63 women are killed each day, 37 mothers are killed every day, leaving their families devastated and children without the nurturing presence of mothers.

In this context of war, how are we to proclaim good news in a land suffering much pain, division, and death? What have we to offer to those who are suffering? The events leading up to Jesus' death were also marked by sorrow, conflict, struggle, and violence., yet there was a breakthrough moment of resurrection.

"Resurrection happens *now*, or it does not happen at all. It happens in us and around us, in persons and history, in nature and universe...it happens in the present moment but it is a present moment bathed in future, a new relationship with God, a new union, a new wholeness for the deepening of life, or as one writer said, the resurrection is "the invasion of the present by the power of what is yet to come."

Illia Delio

Resurrection gives us renewed energy to focus on the future, to keep hope alive, that beyond suffering there will be new life, new possibilities for peace and harmony with our brothers and sisters wherever we live.


As Gregory of Nyssa reminds us: "The power of God is capable of finding hope where hope no longer exists, and a way where the way is impossible."

Let us all "lean into" the resurrection experience of this year to find new energy to live in the present moment with joyful hope and to proclaim boldly: "We have seen the Lord."

On behalf of the staff at NDS Centre for Biblical Formation, we wish you and your families and communities a very blessed Easter.

We hope to see you in our online courses and hopefully next year when we resume programming in Jerusalem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margaret', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sr. Marge, nds

Executive Director - NDS Centre for Biblical Formation

March 21, 2024

Jerusalem