

REFLECTION

By **Michael O'Smith**, former Jesuit Volunteer

"The one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed." (John 20:8)

The Beloved Disciple is clearly the model of Easter faith in this Sunday's Gospel, but I am challenged and inspired by the examples of Mary and Peter as well. Mary rushes to judge the facts of a scene that shocks her. Her heart is set on finding Jesus' dead body, but the rolled-away stone rolls away her plans. Often, I have been so attached to a plan or an idea that I react to a crisis rashly. I want to immediately share with others my story or my outrage. So, I love how Mary's response is so rash and passionate because it reflects her passionate grief and love! Her testimony, though not wholly accurate, leads others to investigate further. Peter is a seeker. He needs more details than what Mary can give him. Maybe he doesn't fully trust the messenger's testimony, or maybe the news is so astounding that it suspends his belief. Either way, Peter wants to see for himself. When he eventually enters the tomb and sees the burial cloths, I imagine him standing there, numb with shock. I've been numbed by many things I've seen this past year as well. It's hard to believe, or to serve, when you are numb. But then the beloved disciple joins Peter and also notices the neatly rolled up head cloth. He connects the dots and takes the leap of faith, amazing though the implication is, that Jesus has risen by his own power, and that death and chaos have been defeated. In my life and service, may I love like Mary, seek like Peter, and believe like the Beloved Disciple.

EASTER 2021

He is Risen!

FOCUS: COMMUNITY

A healthy community needs, activates, recognizes, and celebrates each person's gifts. We also receive, interpret, and respond to meaningful news in a community. Each of the three disciples who were there on Easter morning had a role in testifying to an aspect of the truth: the stone was rolled away, the tomb was empty, and God's work was at hand. They shared what they had seen and believed with others in a community. Then, they began to celebrate. It's in just those kind of moments in my immediate community, usually over a meal or beverage, that I experience hope and joy, even in the midst of unsettling news.

PRAYER

*Almighty God,
Yours is the victory over death,
and You rise up for us.
Yours is the love that never dies,
and You reach out to us.
Yours is the life that sustains all life,
and You breathe it into us.
By Your grace, may we serve with passionate
love, seek with humility, and dare to believe
with the hope that Your Resurrection brings.
May we testify to the good news we have
seen, and may our communities thrive in the
sharing of faith, hope, and love.
In the name of Jesus Christ, crucified and
risen, we pray.*

AMEN.

SERVICE SUGGESTION

This Easter season, you might find a way to become an active witness of good news in the unsettling times we live in. Identify a person, community, or cause that you are passionate about. "Hang out" with or study that person, community, or cause, and truly listen and observe. Humbly seek out more information. Pray on it. Where is God at work in this person, community, or cause? Discern with care what the good news story is that would build up others in your community, and how you might share it appropriately and discretely (i.e. a conversation, a letter to the editor, etc). Then become a bearer of that good news.