

## 3. Revolutionary Mercy



### GATHERING SPACE

The stone at the entrance to the tomb on Easter Sunday morning was a force to be reckoned with. When the women came to perform their ritual of mercy they were faced with the cold, harsh resistance of a blockade ... The movement of the stone would have to come from within the tomb. The stone had been put there by broken relationships, obscene violence and the power of fear ... It was the mercy of God that unblocked the entrance to the tomb ... the miracle of kindness softened the burial place and the earth trembled with hope. (Burke)

The revolutions of history have changed political and economic systems but none have really changed the human heart. True revolution, the revolution that radically transforms life was brought about by Jesus through his resurrection. (Pope Francis)

> What inner strength is needed to move the blocking stones in your life?

### FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Pope Francis states in *The Church of Mercy* that “unless Christians are revolutionaries, they are not Christians.” The foundation story of the empty tomb is a moment of revolution, a totally new paradigm, a ‘light’ moment for the women, for Peter, for the disciples and for all of us.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by

them in dazzling apparel; and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise.” And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Mag’dalene and Jo-an’na and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told this to the apostles; but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home wondering at what had happened. (Luke 24)

### FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- > How is the call to be revolutionaries realised in your work on this Board?
- > The women’s task was one of mercy. Can you recall times when small acts of generosity and care have transformed even the most ordinary situations?

## PRAYER

God of surprises

Inspire us in this Board meeting to be revolutionary Christians.

May the empty tomb teach us to embrace the new and unexpected as we work to realise the gospel of mercy in our world.

**For the confidence to find the voice of justice and compassion when we need to speak out**

*God of revolutionary love, challenge us*

**For the faith to embrace a resurrection vision of the world transformed by love**

*God of revolutionary love, challenge us*

**For the trust to embark on new pathways and to seek new horizons in our journey of Mercy**

*God of revolutionary love, challenge us*

**For the humility to live in respectful coexistence with others**

*God of revolutionary love, challenge us*

**For the courage, in this Year of Mercy, to open the doors of our hearts to change**

*God of revolutionary love, challenge us*

*(Pause for any special intentions)*

## FOR THE END OF THE MEETING

Lord

May we be generous in our sharing

Courageous in our leadership

Gentle in our relationships

And merciful in all of our endeavours.

Help us to recognise you in everyone we meet.

May the light

of your new life shine forth from us,

so that we may fill the world

with the good news of your resurrection.

(Simmonds)

Let us not be closed to the newness God wants  
to bring to our lives...

Sanctity does not consist especially in doing  
extraordinary things, but in allowing God to  
act. (Pope Francis)

Burke, A. *The Quality of Mercy* (2015), p53. Pope Francis: *The Church of Mercy* (2014), p12. Illustration from Sieger Köder 'Art and Inspiration'. Bible: Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition.

COMPASSION JUSTICE RESPECT HOPE



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