



# MARY MAGDALENE GATHERING

## March 17, 2024

presented for the Magdalene Community Houston Texas



# WELCOME

Breathing in, I am aware of my heart. Breathing out,  
I smile to my heart and know that my heart still  
functions normally. I feel grateful for my heart.

Thich Nhat Hanh

# HOLY WEEK DIALOGUE

***ALL: "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ([Luke 22:15-16](#), ESV)***

# Bethany – a last stop

- When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.
- <sup>7</sup> Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.
- <sup>8</sup> His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

Originally, marking the start of Passover, now Palm Sunday begins Holy Week in traditional Christianity. Passover, a day of high ritual, a day Jesus and the disciples honored and traveled into the city of Jerusalem to celebrate.



Yet according to the Gospel of John, Mary has already anointed Jesus with the costly nard Before his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, he had spoken of his burial. Only in John is the woman who holds the alabaster jar given a name. Mark and Matthew simply say a woman but describe a similar scene, all set at the house of Simon the Leper.\*



- It is also in John that the disciple who criticizes Mary's action is identified as Judas the Iscariot, saying, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?"
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- John tells us that Judas said this not because he cared about the poor but "because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions."
- Just as Judas was already plotting the betrayal of Jesus, Mary knew the day of Jesus' death was imminent.





- The next day, Jesus rides the donkey into Jerusalem, his entry met by crowds waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
- John tells us that the large crowd of the Jews found out that he (Jesus) was there and came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.
- Were there two different crowds in the masses? One filled with his followers, those who could testify to his raising Lazarus from the tomb.
- The other, the masses who would become the mob, came curious to see the man once dead who had been given life by this itinerate teacher from Nazareth.

# John 11, 45-48

- Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.
- <sup>46</sup> But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.



- For the next days, Jesus performed many miracles, almost as if to defy the Pharisees and still there were those who could not, would not. believe.
- But the Magdalene believed.
- Did she see the dark shadow cross his face each time Jesus spoke of his coming death, of his burial, of being raised up and the three days to follow?
- She would have known his time on earth was short. I see her watching him, memorizing every line of his face, his gestures, the sound of his voice. Watching him, perhaps from afar as he spoke, healed, taught, his back to her and remembering the strength of his shoulders.





Passover is celebrated following the first full moon after the spring equinox.

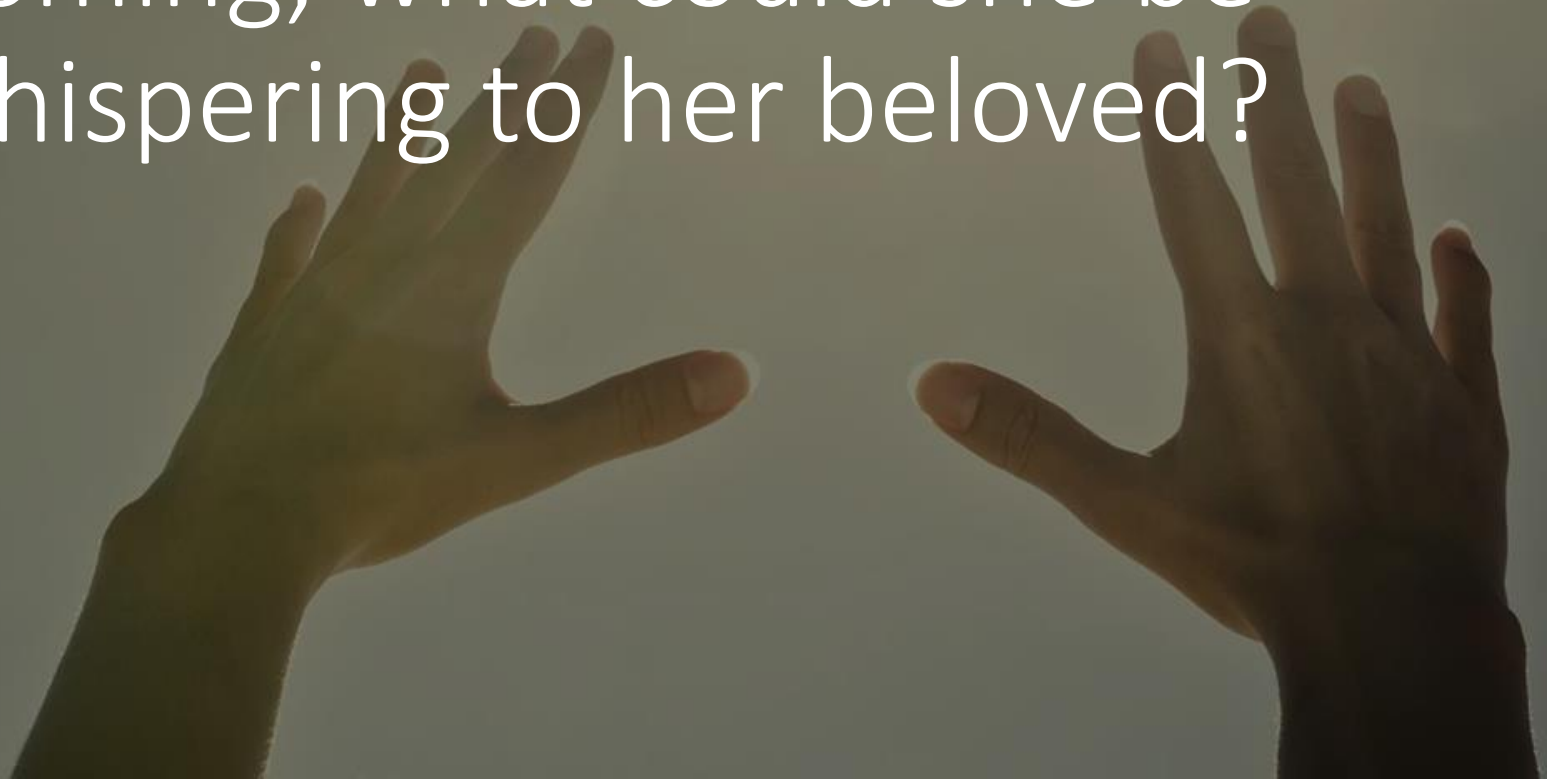
This Passover would end on the first Easter, now only days away.

Did the Magdalene sit that night bathed in the light of the full moon? She knew Jesus would travel into Jerusalem the next day.

If she prayed, what was she praying for? Perhaps she was somehow comforted by that moon, for she knew that all would soon be taken away.

Dorothy Gibbons

On that night, waiting for “the betrayal” that Mary knew was coming, what could she be whispering to her beloved?



# WHO HEARD THE WORDS?

Most Christians are aware of the last seven phrases that Jesus spoke from the cross. Often called Jesus' last words, thousands of theologians have pondered and written about their meaning. Throughout the ages, clergy have based sermons on these words, focused on demonstrating his sacrifice for humanity's sins.

During Lent, these words become especially meaningful. We approach Good Friday profoundly aware that a real man, a human being made of flesh and blood, said these words. A man in excruciating agony, a man falsely accused and sentenced to the worst and most humiliating form of punishment and death.



The traditional order of the saying is:

Luke 23:34: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Luke 23:43: Verily, I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.

John 19:26-27 Woman, behold thy son. (Says to disciple) Behold thy mother

Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34:

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?

John 19:28: I thirst

John 19:30: It is finished

Luke 23:46: Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit

We know the phrases well. Some of us heard them throughout our religious upbringing; others from the thousands of filmmakers throughout the world attempting to capture this moment in time.

Consider the physical state of this man. He had been scourged to the point of exhaustion. It is said that during the floggings, the Roman soldiers stood in front and back of the prisoner as they administered their horrible punishment.

The loss of blood from whips, tipped with steel balls, tearing through the skin would weaken even the most physically fit. The scourging alone made it impossible for Jesus to carry the beam of his eventual death. He could barely walk through the streets.

Once at Golgotha, after ending the pain of foot-long spikes being driven through his flesh, the soldiers hoisted his body onto the cross, pulling his arms out of their sockets. Then they forced his legs together and drilled another spike through his feet, nailing them to the wood. Stripped naked, exhausted, weak, he hung there for hours, his life slipping away.

This is not a man who could have screamed these last words, at least not all of them, especially after enduring such excruciating pain. It is doubtful that he would have had enough breath left to speak above much more than a whisper.

*Who heard those last words?*

The disciples had fled in fear; all the disciples. The crowds watched from a distance.

Who would have been close enough to the cross, to his body, to hear them?

Dorothy Gibbons

A photograph of a cave opening looking out onto a beach at sunset. The cave's interior is dark and textured with rock formations. The opening reveals a bright, golden sunset sky over the ocean, with waves crashing onto a sandy beach. The text "WHOM COULD MARY CONFIDE TO?" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

WHOM COULD MARY CONFIDE TO?



PRAYER  
REQUESTS FOR  
PALM SUNDAY



# HOLY WEEK CLOSING DIALOGUE

SOLO: Peace be with you

UNISON: Bear my peace within yourselves!

SOLO: Beware that no one lead you astray saying, "Look over here!" Or "Look over there!"

UNISON: For the Child of True Humanity is within you!

SOLO: Follow it!

UNISON: Those who seek it will find it



The background of the image consists of numerous diagonal stripes in various shades of green and blue, creating a dynamic, textured effect. The stripes vary in width and intensity, with some appearing as bright, sharp lines and others as softer, blurred bands. The overall color palette is vibrant and natural, suggesting a connection to nature or a fresh, energetic theme.

Our next Gathering will be on  
April 28, 2024