

**Part 1: Today's Gospel Reading is Mark 16:9-15 where the RISEN Jesus first appears to Mary Magdalene**

**Before we begin,**

**Let's set aside all the distractions in our hearts and minds as we prepare ourselves for the presence of the Holy Spirit...**

**As I read, imagine yourself as one of the characters. Are you  
Mary Magdalene, One of Jesus' companions who are mourning & weeping,  
One of the two disciples walking along the road,  
Or perhaps, you're the alive & risen Jesus or one of the eleven at the table**

**\*\*READ MARK 16:9-15\*\***

**The Gospel according to Mark.**

**After sitting and reflecting with this Gospel passage it struck me:**

**\*Prior to this passage, Jesus had told Mary Magdalene that He would RISE-  
But, after the brutality of the crucifixion, she went to the tomb expecting to anoint HIS  
body**

**\*Today, as we take our first steps into service, we KNOW FOR CERTAIN that Jesus is  
ALIVE HERE & NOW! This knowledge animates our steps!**

**\*Pope Francis refers to Mary Magdalene as the "Apostle to the Apostles"  
We, too, are called to be Apostles to each other.**

**\*In their unbelief, Jesus rebuked them for their "hardness of heart"....  
But the story doesn't end there. Jesus accepts the Apostles, where they were in their own  
Conversion, as he sends them out into the world to "Proclaim the Gospel to every Creature"**

**\*Jesus does the same with us! And we are called to do the same with each other!  
Jesus accepts us where we are in our own conversion as he invites us  
to go out into the world to bring life, to bring justice, to bring hope to every creature.  
And don't forget to bring the Risen Jesus right along with you! This makes all  
the difference.**

*[personal story of a rehabilitation program designed for men.....]*

*Some programs offer little hope for a long lasting life in recovery.*

*Things can be different. Addiction does not need to be the end of the story. Coming out of prison shouldn't mean you'll soon be returning back to prison. A new way of life can be created and maintained. Just ask some of the men who participate in the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's "On the Rise Bakery" where men come out of residential rehab for substance abuse and/or come out of prison and are given the chance to create a new way of living. My friend, Edward, did just that. Edward spent 30 years of his life going in & out of prison. But his life changed once he became part of On the Rise Bakery. There he created & maintained a new life for the last \_\_\_\_\_ of his life. Shortly before he died, he was invited to speak at Harvard on prison reform. Edward became my Brother and changed my life and my heart. I'm so glad I volunteered there.*