



EASTER REFLECTION 2019 - Called By Name

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher.

~John 20:15-16

It was on this story of Resurrection from John's gospel that we based the message for our Easter Mass here at BSM. Mary, left alone at the empty tomb, is in total despair. She has not only gone through her teacher's passion and death but now has found that somehow his body is missing. She does not recognize Jesus but thinks he is a gardener; she doesn't recognize Jesus until he speaks her name: "Mary!"

For me, that has such powerful meaning. Simply by speaking her name, Jesus calls Mary from darkness to light, from despair to hope. When I hear this story, I recall so many kids I have known over the years who were also called from doubt and darkness and despair. One in particular stands out. We were only a few weeks into the new school year when a small freshman boy walked into my office with a question: "Mr. J, I'm really having trouble with religion class because I've never been to a Catholic school. I was wondering if you could go over stuff with me before tests, just to make sure I have it right?" I said yes, and we set up a time the following week to prepare for his first test.

At the beginning of that first study session, he told me that I would have trouble with him because he was an atheist. In reply, I said that, in fact, he was the one who would have trouble with me. This kid, who had always seemed so very serious, simply smiled. As we worked together, he opened up about his depression and his anxiety. His life was lived in fear; it was a constant struggle, a battle that seemed unending, a battle he could never seem to win. We prepared for his tests that first year, but we also prepared for something much greater: his call to faith.

There were many more meetings that took place throughout his four years with us at BSM, meetings that truly reflected a deep desire for a closer relationship with God. By his senior year, he would stop in before tests, not to go over material but to ask me to pray with him. In his deepening faith, he was beginning to find a new freedom from doubt and fear he was leaving the darkness behind and seeing all the possibilities that life could hold for him. His journey continues, still being called by name.

This story is one of many that I've witnessed here at BSM. As I hope you realize, there is something very special about this place something that you see and feel the moment you walk in. I know that it is God's Spirit that has always moved through these halls and breathed life into our lives, working in and through the many people who have been a part of our history. In this place, I have seen the lives and hearts and souls of countless people changed forever.

As I close this reflection, I pray that the Easter Season holds countless blessings for you, my friends. I know that life, at times, can be challenging and can hold moments of pain and doubt and fear. At those times, and truly at all times, may you listen for the sound of your name, calling you from darkness into light, calling you to be all that you were created to be. May God bless and keep you always in His care.

Love and Prayers,
Mike Jeremiah
Campus Minister