

Culham / REEP Easter Calendar 2003

<http://www.reep.org/resources/easter03/>

RESURRECTION

ANGELS

On the morning of Easter Day, Jesus' disciples were amazed to discover his tomb empty – only the cloth that had been used to wrap his body was to be found, neatly folded. Angels, *'two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning'* – were also there.

MARY MAGDALENE

Mary Magdalene was one of the first people to discover that the tomb was empty. She went back out into the garden, confused and weeping. She bumped into someone who asked why she was so upset. Suddenly she realized that it was Jesus!

JESUS/GARDENER

Mary Magdalene at first thought that Jesus was the gardener! She explains that she is upset because she thinks someone has stolen Jesus' body. Jesus says her name: "Mary!". It is at this point that she realizes whom she is speaking to. *'She turned towards him and cried out "Rabboni!"*

.....

EXTRA INFORMATION

ANGELS

In Matthew's Gospel Pilate put soldiers to guard the tomb, but an angel came and tore away the stone that had been used to block the entrance. *'The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men'* (Matthew 28:4).

Angels are powerful creatures! Even the women disciples who first entered the tomb were filled with awe in the presence – *'the women bowed down with their faces to the ground'* (Luke 24.5) – though the angels quickly reassured them that all was well: Jesus is alive!

In the Christian calendar, Easter Day is always a Sunday.

MARY MAGDALENE

All the Gospels agree that the first people to discover the empty tomb were Jesus' female disciples. The women then ran and told the men. Peter, John and others came to investigate and discovered that what the women had told them was true. Everyone was clearly very confused!

It obviously took the first disciples quite a long time to sort out in their minds what was going on – and what the implications of it all were. You could say that this process is still going on today for Christians who try to understand what it means to say that 'Jesus is alive'.

JESUS/GARDENER

Mary was not the only one who didn't at first recognize Jesus. When he appeared later to two disciples on the road to Emmaus and had a long conversation with them, neither at first recognized who it is. This seems really odd. But is it all that difficult to understand? None of the disciples seems to have been prepared for the resurrection – it just wasn't a possibility in their minds. Jesus was dead – and dead people don't come alive again! What we see has a lot to do with what we *expect* to see.

Culham / REEP Easter Calendar 2003

<http://www.reep.org/resources/easter03/>

'*Rabboni*' means teacher in Aramaic, the language which Jesus and his disciples spoke. The moment when Mary met Jesus was a very intimate moment. She suddenly realized that it was her *friend* who was speaking. Today Christians believe that the risen Jesus was not like the angels, awesome and intimidating, but someone who knows us and loves us.

Copyright Culham Institute / REEP 2003