



Very early when the sun had risen, on the first day of the week, the women came to the tomb. They saw that the stone had been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side. He said to them: Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold the place where they had laid him.

Mark 16: 1-7

+ Rome, Palm Sunday 2007

Dear Sisters,

Three women in front of the empty tomb – this is the exact moment the artist, Sister Erentrud Trost, OSB, has shown in this painting. It is part of a Biblical illumination that the Benedictine nun has made for the Cathedral in Minden. The painting is integrated into the initial letter **A** with which this Easter Gospel begins (in German). The letter gives us the impression of an empty tomb. The angel declares to the three women that Jesus is living. The sun that is shining above the angel is both a sign of the early morning and a symbol of the Risen Christ. It is especially fascinating that the women are looking up to the sun. The empty tomb – it becomes for them the first “witness” of the resurrection of Christ. Their love for him whom they had followed gives them “Easter eyes,” eyes that can see in the empty tomb the miracle of the resurrection, which they then proclaim to the disciples. But they did not have “Easter eyes” immediately. Only gradually did they understand the meaning of the empty tomb. In the beginning they could not believe that Jesus had been raised. Only John “saw and believed” (cf. John 20:8) upon entering the empty tomb. The others needed time until they understood what Easter meant for their lives: They no longer had to be locked in fear; on the contrary, always and everywhere they could rely on the risen Lord. Only slowly did they receive “Easter eyes”.

In some villages in France the people have kept an interesting custom. When the church bells ring for the first time early on Easter Sunday morning, children and adults run to the well of the village and wash their eyes with the cool, pure water. The meaning of this custom is apparent: Easter gives us a new gaze, new eyes.

How can we intensify the awareness of our eyes, ears, and heart for the Easter event? Is there a “well” in our life to which we can run and “wash” the eyes of faith? It might be that we also begin only very slowly to see – like Peter, who saw the same as John, but needed a much longer time before he could comprehend, in faith, the resurrection. Or like Thomas who only believed after he had touched the wounds of Jesus. It is important that we reckon with the encounter of the Risen Lord in our life. The disciples experienced that we cannot shut out the Lord by closing doors and building thick walls out of fear. He joins us when we – like the disciples of Emmaus – want to run away, when we feel let down by our disappointing and wounded life-story. He is going with us and imparts a new view of life based on Scripture and gives us “Easter eyes,” when we ask him to stay with us.

I want to close this letter with a wish by Bishop Hemmerle from Aix-la-Chapelle (+ January 23, 1994): *I wish us all Easter eyes that are able to see in death, already life; in guilt, reconciliation; in separation, unity; in the wounds, already glory; in human beings, God’s image; in God, all people; in self, the other. And above all I wish you the power of Easter.*

Information:

- Because of her serious illness Sister Maria Nicholson, Uruguay-Argentinian Province, asked that the office of first assistant to the Provincial be reassigned to another Sister. Sister receives her treatments in the USA and therefore she does not see herself able to support Sister María del Rosario in the way required of the first assistant. After consultation with Sister María del Rosario and Sister María, as well as with the other councilors, the members of the council are as follows:

Sister María Angelina Rivaroli	1 st Assistant
Sister María Adriana Mateos	2 nd Assistant
Sister Celina Raquel Ladrón de Guevara	3 rd Assistant
Sister María Nicholson	4 th Assistant

We are grateful to the Sisters that they are willing to support Sister María del Rosario in her leadership service in this time of many challenges.

- In the N.A. Western Province, the term of Sister Mary Clement Eiden and her assistants will end on September 8 of this year. Because of health reasons Sister Mary Clement asked urgently not to be re-nominated for a 2nd term. My councilors and I had to respect this decision. We are very grateful to Sister Mary Clement for her selfless leadership service during the past six years during which she had given all of her gifts of heart and mind for the good of the province. Taking into consideration the suggestions of the Sisters I nominated, with the consent of my councilors, Sister Janice Boyer as Provincial Superior. The term of five years will begin on September 8. The nomination of the councilors can only be done after Easter.

I ask you, dear Sisters, to accompany both provinces with your prayers.

- In my last letter I informed you about the delegates of the General Chapter. Today I want to let you know the names of those who will help us in various ways during the General Chapter:

Moderator:	P. Anthony McSweeney, SSS
Assistant Moderator:	Sister Maria Ancilla König, German Province
Assistant Secretaries:	Sister Mary Dominic Kopitar, Eastern Province Sister Carol Bredenkamp, Western Province
Translators:	Sister Gunthilde Tillmann, German Province (English – German) Sister Mary Perpetua Rehle, Eastern Province (German – English) Sister Dominga Zapata, Society of Helpers, USA (English – Spanish) Sister Melissa Garza, MPS, Mexico (Spanish – English) Sister Rosa Maria Dewes, SSpS, Argentina (German – Spanish; Spanish – German)
Help in Motherhouse:	Sister Henrica Westermann, German Province Sister María Josefina Acevedo, Chilean Province/Rome

Once again I repeat – with the words of Bishop Hemmerle: I wish all of us Easter eyes – and above all the power of Easter.

United with you in gratitude,

your

Sr. Adalberto