

**Reflection on the Gospel-Easter Vigil Year B  
(Mark 16:1-8)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

At the foot of Mt Macedon, where I spent the first sixteen years of my life, stands the lovely Church of the Resurrection, built in the aftermath of the devastating 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires. The most striking feature of this church is Leonard French's stained glass depiction of the resurrection experience of a devastated community, a statement of hope in the face of death and seeming hopelessness. Macedon has risen from the ashes and is once again a vibrant community. The Church of the Resurrection serves as a reminder of the community's faith and provides a context for re-remembering events that united its members in unexpected ways. In a particularly graphic way, it brings the lower-key experience of the local community into dialogue with its upper-key Story of the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

We take time at Easter to re-member, re-enact, and re-tell the originating stories of our tradition. We dramatise and celebrate in solemn ritual what we celebrate in lower key every Sunday of the year. In our faith inspired re-telling, all the power and grace of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are made present to us and to our world. Resurrection faith is a commitment to life.

In Mark's resurrection account (Mark 16:1-8), the place of death, the tomb, lies empty and the message of life is proclaimed. The young man, God's messenger, sends the women who have witnessed the death and burial of Jesus to proclaim the news of his resurrection to the male disciples. Some interpret the silence of the women as failure. Others see it as the appropriate stance before the wonder of God's power. The gospel narrative itself bears witness to a mission ultimately accomplished.

The ongoing war in Syria and the devastation caused by Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu foreground the language of death and resurrection. As we enter into the Easter mysteries, we carry with us the chaos of broken communities, human and more-than-human. We pray for order out of the chaos and for a real return to life for the struggling and displaced. We join with those who are sharing their resources and re-ordering their own way of being in the Earth community in order to make this happen.