

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Sunday, April 16, 2017*

YEAR A - EASTER SUNDAY

Welcome everyone, and Happy Easter! Our Gospel reading of the account of the resurrection comes from Matthew. Here, we are told that "Mary Magdalen and the other Mary" came to Jesus' tomb. Let us spend a little time considering the importance of the "Marys" in the narrative of Christ. There has been some academic debate over whether Mary Magdalen and Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus, were the same person. If they were the same person, then "the other Mary" referred to here would be the mother of Jesus. I think it rather unlikely that Mary Magdalen would be referred to specifically, while relegating the mother of Christ as merely that "other Mary." So, I'm going to proceed with our discussion on this basis.

A short while back we looked at the role of the three Simons, now we are going to examine the three Marys similarly. In doing so, we soon discover an identical relationship, that of the hylic, psychic, and pneumatic. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is venerated deeply by the Church. But this veneration is due to her current ascended state. Within the Gospel narrative, we must see her as the hylic component. Now, this is not meant to demean or diminish her role in any way. But it is a fact that she was the physical mother of the Christ, giving to him his physical, that is to say hylic, vehicle. And although she exists now as pure spirit or pneumatic essence, her import to the Gospel is her role of giving physical substance to the Logos.

The pneumatic Mary is quite obviously the Magdlen. This is made abundantly evident throughout the Gnostic gospels. She is depicted as not only the most beloved of the apostles, but as the most enlightened, even being called the apostle to the apostles. Here status is emphasized in today's Gospel reading where she is identified specifically compared to "the other Mary." Speculations on the role and import of Mary Magdalen are many, and we do not have time to explore them right now. Let it suffice to identify her as the "pneumatic" Mary.

This leaves us, then, with Mary of Bethany as the "psychic" Mary. The accounts of her in the Gospels bears this out, as the one being most interested in the moral and intellectual teachings of Jesus. Even within her own family we see her taking on the psychic role. Her sister Martha is concerned more with physical labor than with intellectual study. She is not without merit, but her labor is upon the hylic plane. Mary's brother, Lazarus, was concerned with the mysteries of death and resurrection. He was an initiate, and thus represents the pneumatic.

It is therefore apt that the psychic and the pneumatic, represented by the two Marys, are associated with the resurrection. For, Jesus has shed his hylic envelope and walks the earth for a time in his psychic envelope. But this too will be shed at the ascension.