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Value of Human Tears   <u>Tuesday within the Octave of Easter</u>   April 3, 2018   8:15
AM   Acts 2:36-41;   **Jn 20:11-18**   (This is all part of the Incarnation of the Word of God
into human life, again, what makes Christianity distinct.)

"Woman, why are you weeping?"

Mary Magdalene has given us the word maudlin; **maudlin comes from Magdalene**, which means **an overly weepy person or situation.** Her role is very important. She is actually one of the chief disciples, as is evidenced today by the fact that she is **the first disciple to whom Jesus appears.** Now this is not because she is the one that went to the tomb. Jesus could appear anywhere at any time; he chose her.

Now this weeping is something we should look at because tears are very important in the Christian gospel. Tears are very important among the saints; the saints talk about **the gift of tears.** It is a very important charism. It actually **moves hearts and purifies the psyche, the soul.** Jesus himself cried, wept over Jerusalem because of the hardness of the hearts of the people, who were ignoring what was happening right in front of them. According to John, Jesus also wept at the death of Lazarus, although the other evangelists know nothing of Lazarus. So **Jesus wept**; Mary Magdalene wept. The saints talk about the gift of tears.

This is all part of the Incarnation of the Word of God into human life, again, what makes Christianity distinct. There are no tears in Buddhism. There are no tears in Yoga, which is a religion, not an exercise program. There are no tears in Hinduism. They are austere; they are withdrawn. They are ascetic, and they leave behind and withdraw from human emotion, but not Christ and faith in Christ. **It's about being immersed in human emotion.** And Jesus himself said in the beatitudes, "Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted." Would the Buddha ever say anything like that? Of course not. Mourning to him was a waste of time; it was an exercise in something pointless, but not for Jesus.

Now Mary's relation with Jesus was deeply emotional, and that's why she was weeping. Here however, in a way, there is almost a rebuke: **"Stop holding on to me."** So naturally when people want to be together and when they are very emotionally connected, there is a certain sort of **hugging or grasping. Well this is not the time for that**, because Jesus now, having been

prepared by his death and resurrection to ascend to the Father, really has to be about his business. And this is a very great business he is about.

And if anyone should ever wonder about the reality of the resurrection of Christ, they only have to think about this question: **Well, if Christ were not raised from the dead, why did the Church ever happen?** How could it have happened? Some historians like to say, well, the Church became strong because the Roman Empire made it the official religion. Oh no, **the Roman Empire made it the official religion, unfortunately, because it was already so strong.** It was a winning operation; Constantine joined the winning side. He knew very well what he was doing. And how did this ever become a winning proposition? It is because actually **Christ was raised from the dead.** And this changed the hearts and the minds in the lives of all those who came into contact with it in an accepting way. Now there were those who came into contact with it in a non-accepting way, and it didn't affect them at all or made them perhaps harder, more hateful maybe.

So this is the event that God has sent to us to turn our lives around, and I mean our lives including our values, our behavior, our thinking, everything, and of course including our emotions. **God is really interested in the whole of the human person**, and not only the whole of the human person as an individual, but **the whole of human society.** And the death of Jesus was the death of the seed which grew into a whole new creation, a whole new order. But it can only grow, this new order, this new creation, can only grow through willing faith and willing hope and willing love.