

## Matthew: 28:1–20

### From Catena Aurea:

1. In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.
2. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.
3. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:
4. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.
5. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.
6. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
7. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

**AUGUSTINE.** (de Cons. Ev. iii. 24.) Concerning the hour when the women came to the sepulchre there arises a question not to be overlooked. Matthew here says, On the evening of the Sabbath. What then means that of Mark, Very early in the morning, the first day of the week? (Mark 16:2.) Truly Matthew, by naming the first part of the night, to wit, the evening, denotes the whole night in the end of which they come to the sepulchre. But seeing the Sabbath hindered them from doing this before, he designates the whole night by the earliest portion of it in which it became lawful for them to do whatever, during some period of the night, they designed to do. Thus, On the evening of the sabbath, is just the same as if he had said, On the night of the sabbath, i. e. the night which follows the day of the sabbath, which is sufficiently proved by the words which follow, As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week. This could not be if we understood only the first portion of the night, its beginning, to be conveyed by the word, evening. For the evening or beginning of the night does not begin to dawn towards the first day of the week, but only the night which is concluded by the dawn. And this is the

usual mode of speaking in Holy Scripture, to express the whole by a part. By evening therefore he implied the night, in the end of which they came to the sepulchre.

**JEROME.** Or, otherwise; This apparent discrepancy in the Evangelists as to the times of their visits is no mark of falsehood, as wicked men urge, but shews the sedulous duty and attention of the women, often going and coming, and not enduring to be long absent from the sepulchre of their Lord.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 75.)g. Because the sabbath is illuminated, not taken away, by Christ, Who said, I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. (Matt. 5:17.) It is illuminated that it may lighten into the Lord's day, and shine forth in the Church, when it had hitherto burnt dim, and been obscured by the Jews in the Synagogue.

It follows, Came Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, &c. Late runs woman for pardon, who had run early to sin; in paradise she had taken up unbelief, from the sepulchre she hastes to take up faith; she now hastens to snatch life from death, who had before snatched death from life. And it is not, They come, but came, (in the singular,) for in mystery and not by accident, the two came under one name. She came, but altered; a woman, changed in life, not in name; in virtue, not in sex. The women go before the Apostles, bearing to the Lord's sepulchre a type of the Churches; the two Marys, to wit. For Mary is the name of Christ's mother; and one name is twice repeated for two women, because herein is figured the Church coming out of the two nations, the Gentiles and the Jews, and being yet one. Mary came to the sepulchre, as to the womb of the resurrection, that Christ might be the second time born out of the sepulchre of faith, who after the flesh had been born of her womb; and that as a virgin had borne Him into this life present, so a sealed sepulchre might bring Him forth into life eternal. It is proof of Deity to have left a womb virgin after birth, and no less to have come forth in the body from a closed sepulchre.

**JEROME.** And, behold, there was a great earthquake. Our Lord, Son at once of God and man, according to His twofold nature of Godhead and of flesh, gives a sign one while of His greatness, another while of His lowliness. Thus, though now it was man who was crucified, and man who was buried, yet the things that were done around shew the Son of God.

**HILARY.** The earthquake is the might of the resurrection, when the sting of death being blunted, and its darkness illuminated, there is stirred up a quaking of the powers beneath, as the Lord of the heavenly powers rises again.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** Or the earthquake was to rouse and waken the women, who had come to anoint the body; and as all these things were done in the night-time, it was probable that some of them had fallen asleep.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 77 et 74.) If the earth thus quaked when the Lord rose again to the pardon of the Saints, how will it quake when He shall rise again to the punishment of the wicked? As the Prophet speaks, The earth trembled when the Lord rose again to judgment. (Ps. 76:8.) And how will it endure the Lord's presence, when it was unable to endure the presence of His Angel? And the Angel of the Lord descended from heaven. For when Christ arose, death was destroyed, commerce with heaven is restored to things on the earth; and woman, who had of old held communication to death with the Devil, now holds communication to life with the Angel.

**HILARY.** This is an instance of the mercy of God the Father, to supply the ministry of heavenly power to the Son on His resurrection from the grave; and he is therefore the proclaimer of this first resurrection, that it may be heralded by some attendant token of the Father's good pleasure.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 74.) He said not 'rolled,' but rolled back; because the rolling to of the stone was a proof of death; the rolling it back asserted the resurrection. The order of things is changed; The Tomb devours death, and not the dead; the house of death becomes the mansion of life; a new law is imposed upon it, it receives a dead, and renders up a living, man. It follows, And sat thereon. He sat down, who was incapable of weariness; but sat as a teacher of the faith, a master of the Resurrection; upon the stone, that the firmness of his seat might assure the sted fastness of the believers; the Angel rested the foundations of the Faith upon that rock, on which Christ was to found His Church. Or, by the stone of the sepulchre may be denoted death, under which we all lay; and by the Angel sitting thereon, is shewn that Christ hath by His might subdued death.

**AUGUSTINE.** (de Cons. Ev. iii. 24.) It may disquiet some, how it is that according to Matthew the Angel sate upon the stone after it had been rolled back from the sepulchre, whereas Mark says that the women having gone into the sepulchre, saw a young man sitting on the right hand. Either we may suppose that they saw two, and that Matthew has not mentioned him whom they saw within, nor Mark

him whom they saw without the sepulchre; but that they heard from each severally what the Angels said concerning Jesus. Or the words, entering into the sepulchre, (Mark 16:5.) may mean entering into some enclosed place, which probably there might be in front of the rock out of which the sepulchre was hewn; and thus it might be the same Angel whom they saw sitting on the right hand, whom Matthew describes as sitting on the stone which he had rolled back.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 75.) The splendour of his countenance is distinct from the shining of his raiment; his countenance is compared to lightning, his raiment to snow; for the lightning is in heaven, snow on the earth; as the Prophet saith, Praise the Lord from the earth; fire and hail, snow and vapours. (Ps. 148:7.) Thus in the Angel's countenance is preserved the splendour of his heavenly nature; in his raiment is shewn the grace of human communion. For the appearance of the Angel that talked with them is so ordered, that eyes of flesh might endure the still splendour of his robes, and by reason of his shining countenance they might tremble before the messenger of their Maker.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 77.) But what means this raiment where there is no need of a covering? The Angel figures our dress, our shape, our likeness in the Resurrection, when man is sufficiently clothed by the splendour of his own body.

**JEROME.** The Angel in white raiment signifies the glory of His triumph.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 75.) For they kept watch over Him with a purpose of cruelty, not with the solicitude of affection. And no man can stand who is forsaken by his own conscience, or troubled with a sense of guilt. Hence the Angel confounds the wicked, and comforts the good.

**JEROME.** The guards lay like dead men in a trance of terror, but the Angel speaks comfort not to them, but to the women, saying, Fear not ye; as much as to say, Let them fear with whom unbelief abides; but do ye who seek the crucified Jesus hear that He has risen again, and has accomplished what He promised.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 77.) For their faith had been bowed by the cruel storm of His Passion, so that they sought Him yet as crucified and dead; I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified; the weight of the trial had bent them to look for the Lord of heaven in the tomb, but, He is not here.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** As much as to say, If ye believe me not, remember His own words. And then follows further proof, when he adds, Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

**JEROME.** That if my words fail to convince you, the empty tomb may.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 76.) Thus the Angel first announces His name, declares His Cross, and confesses His Passion; but straightway proclaims Him risen and their Lord. An Angel after such sufferings, after the grave acknowledges Him Lord; how then shall man judge that the Godhead was diminished by the flesh, or that His Might failed in His Passion. He says, Which was crucified, and points out the place where the Lord was laid, that they should not think that it was another, and not the same, who had risen from the dead. And if the Lord reappears in the same flesh, and gives evidence of His resurrection, why should man suppose that he himself shall reappear in other flesh? Or why should a slave disdain his own flesh, seeing the Lord did not change ours?

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 77.) As much as to say, Woman, now thou art healed, return to the man, and persuade him! to faith, whom thou didst once persuade to treachery. Carry to man the proof of the Resurrection, to whom thou didst once carry counsel of destruction.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** And, behold, he shall go before you, that is, to save you from danger, lest fear should prevail over faith.

**JEROME.** Mystically; He shall go before you into Galilee, that is, into the wallowing sty<sup>1</sup> of the Gentiles, where before was wandering and stumbling, and the foot had no firm and steady resting-place.

28:8–10

8. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

**HILARY.** The women having been comforted by the Angel, are straightway met by the Lord, that when they should proclaim His resurrection to the disciples, they should speak rather from Christ's own mouth than from an Angel's.

**AUGUSTINE.** (de Cons. Ev. iii. 23.) They departed forth of the tomb, that is, from that spot of the garden which was before the tomb hewn in the rock.

**JEROME.** A twofold feeling possessed the minds of the women, fear and joy; fear, at the greatness of the miracle; joy, in their desire of Him that was risen; but both added speed to their women's steps, as it follows, And did run to bring his disciples word. They went to the Apostles, that through them might be spread abroad the seed of the faith. They who thus desired, and who thus ran, merited to have their rising Lord come to meet them; whence it follows, And, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.

**JEROME.** The women ought first to hear this Hail, that the curse of the woman Eve may be removed in these women.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 76.) That in these women is contained a full figure of the Church is shewn hereby, that Christ convinces His disciples when in doubt concerning the Resurrection, and confirms them when in fear; and when He meets them He does not terrify them by His power, but prevents them with the ardour of love. And Christ in His Church salutes Himself, for He has taken it into His own Body.

**AUGUSTINE.** (ubi sup.) We conclude that they had speech of Angels twice at the sepulchre; when they saw one Angel, of whom Matthew and Mark speak; and again when they saw two Angels, as Luke and John relate. And twice in like manner of the Lord; once at that time when Mary supposed Him to be the gardener, (John 20:15.) and now again when He met them in the way to confirm them by repetition, and to restore them from their faintness.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (ubi sup.) Then Mary was not suffered to touch Him; now she has permission not only to touch, but to hold Him altogether; they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (ubi sup.) They hold Christ's feet, who in the Church present the type of Evangelic preaching, and merit this privilege by their running to Him; and by faith so detain their Saviour's footsteps, that they may come to the honour of His perfect Godhead. She is deservedly bid to touch me not, who mourns her Lord upon earth, and so seeks Him dead in the tomb, as not to know that He

reigns in heaven with the Father. This, that the same Mary, one while exalted to the summit of faith, touches Christ, and holds Him with entire and holy affection; and again, cast down in weakness of flesh, and womanly infirmity, doubts, undeserving to touch her Lord, causes us no difficulty. For that is of mystery, this of her sex; that is of divine grace, this of human nature. And so also we, when we have knowledge of divine things, live unto God; when we are wise in human things, we are blinded by our own selves.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 80.) They held His feet to shew that the head of Christ is the man, but that the woman is in Christ's feet, and that it was given to them through Christ, not to go before, but to follow the man. Christ also repeats what the Angel had said, that what an Angel had made sure, Christ might make yet more sure. It follows, Then saith Jesus unto them, Fear not.

**JEROME.** This may be always observed, both in the Old and New Testament, that when there is an appearance of any majestic person, the first thing done is to banish fear, that the mind being tranquillized may receive the things that are said.

**HILARY.** The same order as of old now followed in the reversal of our woe, that whereas death began from the female sex, the same should now first see the glory of the Resurrection, and be made the messenger thereof. Whence the Lord adds, Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, there shall they see me.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (ubi sup.) He calls them brethren whom He has made akin to His own body; brethren whom the generous Heir has made His co-heirs; brethren, whom He has adopted to be sons of His own Father.

**AUGUSTINE.** (de Cons. Ev. iii. ult.) That the Lord, both by His own mouth, and by the Angel, directs them to seek for Him, not in that place in which He was to shew Himself first, but in Galilee, makes every believer anxious to understand in what mystery it is spoken. Galilee is interpreted 'transmigration,' or 'revelationa'. And according to the first interpretation what meaning offers itself, save this, that the grace of Christ was to pass from the people of Israel to the Gentiles, who would not believe when the Apostles should preach the Gospel to them, unless the Lord Himself should first make ready their way in the hearts of men. This is the signification of that, He shall go before you into Galilee. There shall ye see him, means, there shall ye find His members, there shall ye perceive His living Body in such as shall receive you. According to the other interpretation, 'revelation,' it is to be understood,

ye shall see him no longer in the form of a servant, but in that in which He is equal with the Father. That revelation will be the true Galilee, when we shall be like him, and shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2.) That will be the blessed passing from this world to that eternity.

28:11–15

11. Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the Chief Priests all the things that were done.

12. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13. Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** (Hom. xc.) Of the signs which were shewn around Christ, some were common to the whole world, as the darkness; some peculiar to the watch, as the wonderful apparition of Angels, and the earthquake, which were wrought for the soldiers' sake, that they might be stunned with amazement, and bear testimony to the truth. For when truth is proclaimed by its adversaries, it adds to its brightness. Which befel now; Some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the Chief Priests all the things that were done.

**JEROME.** Thus the Chief Priests, who ought to have been by this turned to penitence, and to seek Jesus risen, persevere in their wickedness, and convert the money which was given for the use of the Temple to the purchase of a lie, as before they had given thirty pieces of silver to the traitor Judas.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (ubi sup.) Not content to have put the Master to death, they plot how they may destroy the disciples, and make the Master's power matter of charge against His disciples. The soldiers indeed lost Him, the Jews missed Him, but the disciples crimed Him away, not by theft, but by faith; by virtue, and not by fraud; by holiness, and not by wickedness; alive, and not dead.



**CHRYSOSTOM.** How should the disciples carry Him away by stealth, men poor, and of no station, and who scarcely dared to shew themselves? They fled when afterwards they saw Christ alive, how, when He was dead, would they not have feared so great a multitude of soldiers? How were they to remove the door of the sepulchre? One might have done it unperceived by the guard. But a large stone was rolled to the mouth requiring many hands. And was not the seal thereon? And why did they not attempt it the first night, when there was none at the sepulchre? For it was on the Sabbath that they begged the body of Jesus. Moreover, what mean these napkins which Peter sees laid here? Had the disciples stolen the Body, they would never have stripped it, both because it might so receive hurt, and cause unnecessary delay to themselves, and so expose them to be taken by the watch; especially since the Body and clothes were covered with myrrh, a glutinous spice, which would cause them to adhere. The allegation of the theft then is improbable. So that their endeavours to conceal the Resurrection do but make it more manifest. For when they say, His disciples stole the body, they confess that it is not in the sepulchre. And as they thus confess that they had not the Body, and as the watch, the sealing, and the fears of the disciples, make the theft improbable, there is seen evidence of the Resurrection not to be gainsaid.

**GLOSS.** (non occ.) That the fear of the Governor might not restrain them from this lie, they promise them impunity.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** See how all are corrupted; Pilate persuaded; the people stirred up; the soldiers bribed; as it follows, And they took the money, and did as they were instructed. If money prevailed with a disciple so far as to make him become the betrayer of his Master, what wonder that the soldiers are overcome by it.

**HILARY.** The concealment of the Resurrection, and the false allegation of theft, is purchased by money; because by the honour of this world, which consists in money and desire, Christ's glory is denied.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (ubi sup.) Among the Jews, not among the Christians; what in Judæa the Jew concealed by his gold, is by faith blazed abroad throughout the world.

**JEROME.** All who abuse to other purposes the money of the Temple, and the contributions for the use of the Church, purchasing with them their own pleasure, are like the Scribes and Priests who bought this lie, and the blood of the Saviour.

28:16–20

16. Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**JEROME.** After His Resurrection, Jesus is seen and worshipped in the mountain in Galilee; though some doubt, their doubting confirms our faith.

**AUGUSTINE.** (de Cons. Ev. iii. 25.) But it is to be considered, how the Lord could be seen bodily in Galilee. For that it was not the day of the Resurrection is manifest; for He was seen that day in Jerusalem in the beginning of the night, as Luke and John evidently agree. Nor was it in the eight following days, after which John says that the Lord appeared to His disciples, and when Thomas first saw Him, who had not seen Him on the day of the Resurrection. For if within these eight days the eleven had seen Him on a mountain in Galilee, Thomas, who was one of the eleven, could not have seen Him first after the eight days. Unless it be said, that the eleven there spoken of were eleven out of the general body of the disciples, and not the eleven Apostles. But there is another difficulty. John having related that the Lord was seen not in the mountain, but at the sea of Tiberias, by seven who were fishing, adds, This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after he was risen from the (John 21:14.) dead. (Mark 16:14.) So that if we understand the Lord to have been seen within those eight days by eleven of the disciples, this manifestation at the sea of Tiberias will be the fourth, and not the third, appearance. Indeed, to understand John's account at all it must be observed, that he computes not each appearance, but each day on which Jesus appeared, though He may have appeared more than once on the same day; as He did three times on the day of His Resurrection. We are then obliged to understand that this appearance to the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee took place last of all. In the four Evangelists we find in all ten distinct appearances of Our Lord after His Resurrection. 1. At the sepulchre to the women. 2. To the same women on their way back from the sepulchre. 3. To

Peter. 4. To two disciples as they went into the country. 5. To many together in Jerusalem; 6. when Thomas was not with them. 7. At the sea of Tiberias. 8. At the mountain in Galilee, according to Matthew. 9. To the eleven as they sat at meat, because they should not again eat with Him upon earth, related by Mark. 10. On the day of His Ascension, no longer on the earth, but raised aloft in a cloud, as related by both Mark and Luke. But all is not written, as John confesses, for He had much conversation with them during forty days before His ascension, being seen of them, and speaking unto them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3.)

**JEROME.** Power is given to Him, Who but a little before was crucified, Who was buried, but Who afterwards rose again.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 80.) The Son of God conveyed to the Son of the Virgin, the God to the Man, the Deity to the Flesh, that which He had ever together with the Father.

**JEROME.** Power is given in heaven and in earth, that He who before reigned in heaven, should now reign on earth by the faith of the believers.

**JEROME.** They first then teach all nations, and when taught dip them in water. For it may not be that the body receive the sacrament of Baptism, unless the soul first receive the truth of the Faith. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that they whose Godhead is one should be conferred at once, to name this Trinity, being to name One God.

**CHRYSOLOGUS.** (Serm. 80.) Thus all nations are created a second time to salvation by that one and the same Power, which created them to being.

**JEROME.** (Didymi Lib. ii. de Spir. Sanct.) And though some one there may be of so averse a spirit as to undertake to baptize in such sort as to omit one of these names, therein contradicting Christ Who ordained this for a law, his baptism will effect nothing; those who are baptized by him will not be at all delivered from their sins. From these words we gather how undivided is the substance of the Trinity, that the Father is verily the Father of the Son, and the Son verily the Son of the Father, and the Holy Spirit the Spirit of both the Father and the Son, and also the Spirit of wisdom and of truth, that is, of the Son of God. This then is the salvation of them that believe, and in this Trinity is wrought the perfect communication of ecclesiastical discipline.

**HILARY.** (de Trin. ii. 1 &c.) For what part of the salvation of men is there that is not contained in this Sacrament? All things are full and perfect, as proceeding from Him who is full and perfect. The nature of His relation is expressed in the title Father; but He is nothing but Father; for not after the manner of men does He derive from somewhat else that He is Father, being Himself Unbegotten, Eternal, and having the source of His being in Himself, known to none, save the Son. The Son is the Offspring of the Unbegotten, One of the One, True of the True, Living of the Living, Perfect of the Perfect, Strength of Strength, Wisdom of Wisdom, Glory of Glory; the Image of the Unseen God, the Form of the Unbegotten Father. Neither can the Holy Spirit be separated from the confession of the Father and the Son. And this consolation of our longing desires is absent from no place. He is the pledge of our hope in the effects of His gifts, He is the light of our minds, He shines in our souls. These things as the heretics cannot change, they introduce into them their human explanations. As Sabellius who identifies the Father with the Son, thinking the distinction to be made rather in name than in person, and setting forth one and the same Person as both Father and Son. As Ebion, who deriving the beginning of His existence from Mary, makes Him not Man of God, but God of man. As the Arians, who derive the form, the power, and the wisdom of God out of nothing, and in time. What wonder then that men should have diverse opinions about the Holy Spirit, who thus rashly after their own pleasure create and change the Son, by whom that Spirit is bestowed?

**JEROME.** Observe the order of these injunctions. He bids the Apostles first to teach all nations, then to wash them with the sacrament of faith, and after faith and baptism then to teach them what things they ought to observe; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** And because what He had laid upon them was great, therefore to exalt their spirits He adds, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. As much as to say, Tell Me not of the difficulty of these things, seeing I am with you, Who can make all things easy. A like promise He often made to the Prophets in the Old Testament, to Jeremiah who pleaded his youth, to Moses, and to Ezekiel, when they would have shunned the office imposed upon them. And not with them only does He say that He will be, but with all who shall believe after them. For the Apostles were not to continue till the end of the world, but He says this to the faithful as to one body.

**CHRYSOSTOM.** He brings before them the end of the world, that He may the more draw them on, and that they may not look merely to present inconveniences, but to the infinite goods to come. As much

as to say, The grievous things which you shall undergo, terminate with this present life, seeing that even this world shall come to an end, but the good things which ye shall enjoy endure for ever.

**JEROME.** He then who promises that He will be with His disciples to the end of the world, shews both that they shall live for ever, and that He will never depart from those that believe.

## **From Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture:**

### **28:1 The Dawn of the First Day**

#### **Resolving the Chronology of the Women's Visit.**

Augustine: One must not dismiss lightly the question concerning the exact hour at which the women came to the tomb. For if Matthew says, "In the evening of the sabbath, at the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Madgalene and other Mary came to see the tomb," what then does it mean that Mark says, "And early in the morning on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb at the rising of the sun"? The other two Gospels, Luke and John, do not disagree with Mark; Luke says "early in the morning," and John says "in the morning when it was still dark." Both statements are consistent with Mark's declaration that it was "early in the morning at the rising of the sun," that is, when the heavens in the east were brightening. But this doesn't occur except when the sun is very close to rising, a phenomenon which customarily is called the dawn. Therefore Mark does not oppose John, who says "when it was still dark," for as day is breaking the remaining shadows of darkness diminish only in proportion to the sun's rising. And Luke's phrase, "early in the morning," need not be understood to imply that the sun had already appeared above the horizon but rather is the kind of expression we normally use when we want to signify that something must be done earlier. For when we say "in the morning," lest we are understood to mean that the sun is already visible, we usually add "very early," so that we will be understood to refer to the dawn.

Thus it is said "in the evening of the sabbath," as if he had said "in the night of the sabbath," that is, in the night which follows the day of the sabbath. Matthew's words themselves, however, are sufficient, for he says, "In the evening of the sabbath, at the dawn on the first day of the week." This would be impossible if we understood "in the evening" to signify only the first part of the night. For it is not the beginning of the night which "dawns on the first day of the week" but the night which begins to be terminated by the coming of the light. Now the end of the first part of the night is the beginning of the second part, but the

end of the whole night is the light. Thus we cannot say that the evening is “at the dawn of the first day of the week” unless by “evening” we intend “night,” which the light brings to an end. In addition, it is divine Scripture’s customary way of distinguishing the whole from the part. Therefore by saying “evening” it signifies the whole night, the end of which is the dawn. Thus the women came to the tomb at dawn, and therefore they came at night, which is signified in Scripture by the designation of evening. For, as I have said, the whole night is included under that name. Therefore, in whatever part of the night they may have come, they came at night; even if they came at the very end of the night, the fact remains without a doubt that they came at night. Harmony of the Gospels 3.65.

### **Toward the Dawn.**

Peter Chrysologus: “In the evening toward the dawn.” Behold, with the Lord’s resurrection the evening does not grow dark, it becomes light. What was normally the beginning of night now becomes the break of day. “In the evening of the sabbath toward the dawn of the first day of the week.” Even as mortality is transformed into immortality, corruption into incorruption and flesh into the Word of God, the darkness is transformed into light, so that the night itself rejoices that it did not die but is transmuted....

“In the evening of the sabbath toward the dawn of the first day of the week.” The sabbath rejoices that it now has a subservient effect. Under the yoke of the law the sabbath had become smugly apathetic and alienated from life-giving power. Through the primacy of the Lord’s Day the sabbath is now wonderfully awakened to works of divine power. To paraphrase the Lord: Is it not permitted to heal the sick on the sabbath, to give aid to the afflicted, sight to the blind and life to the dead? Sermons 77.2–3.

### **After the Sabbath.**

Severus: The sacred authors of the Gospels did not say whether the Savior was raised “after the sabbath,” or when most of the night had passed, or at the dawn or when the sun had already begun to shine. Indeed, it would be contradictory for the authors to say that the same event transpired at different times. However, they did write that some of the women arrived at the tomb at one time and some of the women at another time, but not all at the same time—how could that be possible, since they came separately?—and that each of the women heard the angels say similar things regarding the Savior: “He is risen, he is not here,” without adding when his resurrection occurred. It follows that if the resurrection had taken place on that divine night, as all of the Evangelists aver and agree, no one has specified the hour. [That hour] is unknown to the entire world except for the God who was raised and for the Father—who alone knows the Son as he is known by the Son—and except for the Spirit, who “searches everything, even the depths of God.” ...

As for the expression “after the sabbath,” it does not refer to the evening which follows the setting of the sun at the end of the sabbath, for Matthew did not use the singular opse sabbatou but the plural opse sabbatōn. The Jews were accustomed to call the entire week sabbata. Thus the Evangelists call the first day opse sabbatōn when they mean the first day of the week. We also use a colloquial expression when we call the second and third days of the week the second and third of the sabbata. Matthew then did not say opse sabbatou, that is, the evening of the sabbath, because he did not intend to denote the evening of that very day. Rather, he used opse sabbatōn so as to indicate that it was very late and well after the end of the week. Similarly, I think, we are in the habit of saying “you came opse tou kairou [well after the time], opse tēs hōras [well after the hour], opse tēs chreias [well after the need]” not in order to indicate the evening or the time after the setting of the sun but in order to suggest that the person arrived too late for the event. In a similar fashion, opse sabbatōn means that the women arrived very late and well after the end of the week. Now each week ends at the setting of the sun after the sabbath. Cathedral Sermons, Homily 77.

### **The Women Want to See.**

Peter Chrysologus: The apostles are preceded in ministry by women, who follow the men by gender and the disciples by order. The apostles are not thereby made masters by these women. These women are bringing to the sepulcher the form and appearance of women, but they together symbolize the wholeness of the Lord’s churches. Mary and Mary: one as herself, and herself as the other. Mary, the single maternal name of Christ, is duplicated in two women. Here is symbolized the church coming from two peoples yet made into one from two peoples—that is, from the Gentiles and the Jews. For “the first shall be last and the last shall be first.” Sermons 75.3.

### **28:2–3 An Angel Rolls Back the Stone**

#### **Why the Angel Rolled Away the Stone.**

Chrysostom: After the resurrection the angel appeared. But for what purpose did he come? To roll back the stone. Why? To attest to the women of the resurrection so that they might believe. The women themselves had earlier witnessed him in the sepulcher. Now they behold an empty tomb. This is why the angel rolled the stone away and why an earthquake took place: that they might be thoroughly aroused and awakened to the resurrection. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.2.

### **Why Was the Stone Rolled Back?**

Peter Chrysologus: An angel descended and rolled back the stone. He did not roll back the stone to provide a way of escape for the Lord but to show the world that the Lord had already risen. He rolled back the stone to help his fellow servants believe, not to help the Lord rise from the dead. He rolled back the stone for the sake of faith, because it had been rolled over the tomb for the sake of unbelief. He rolled back the stone so that he who took death captive might hold the title of Life. Pray, brothers, that the angel would descend now and roll away all the hardness of our hearts and open up our closed senses and declare to our minds that Christ has risen, for just as the heart in which Christ lives and reigns is heaven, so also the heart in which Christ remains dead and buried is a grave. May it be believed that just as he died, so was he transformed. Christ the man suffered, died and was buried; as God, he lives, reigns, is and will be forever. Sermons 75.4.

### **Resolving Discrepancies.**

Augustine: According to Matthew, the angel sat upon the stone which had been rolled from the tomb, whereas Mark says that upon entering the tomb the women were astounded to see a young man sitting on the right, dressed in a white robe. This discrepancy would be troubling unless we understand that Matthew remained silent concerning that angel whom they saw when they entered the tomb and Mark remained silent concerning that angel whom they saw sitting on the stone outside the tomb. If this be the case, the women saw two angels and heard from them about Jesus progressively; first from the one who sat on the stone outside the tomb and then from the one whom they saw sitting on the right when they entered the tomb. They went into the tomb then because they had been exhorted to do so by the angel sitting outside, when he said, "Come and see where the Lord was placed." Upon entering, as it is written, they saw and heard similar things from the angel sitting on the right side of the tomb, who is mentioned by Mark but ignored by Matthew.

If this explanation fails to satisfy, we certainly ought to understand that when they entered the tomb they were in some sort of walled enclosure which, it is reasonable to believe, had been established as a secured location in front of the rock from which the tomb was cut. According to this scenario, the angel whom they saw sitting on the right side of the tomb would have been in the same space as the angel who Matthew says was sitting on the stone which, at the time of the earthquake, had been rolled back from the entrance to the tomb, that is, from the sepulcher cut from the rock. Harmony of the Gospels 3.63.



### **His Face and His Clothing.**

Peter Chrysologus: "His appearance," says the Evangelist, "was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow." The brightness of his countenance is distinguished from the brilliance of his clothing. His face is compared with lightning from heaven and his garment to snow falling upon the earth. Listen to the prophet as he says, "Praise the Lord from the earth, you fire, hail and snow!" In the angel's face, then, heaven's brilliance adapts to nature. His clothing symbolizes the grace of human fellowship, and the appearance of this angel as he speaks is so tempered that physical eyes can withstand the peaceful brilliance of his raiment. As they look upon the lightning of his appearance, they tremble and revere the messenger of their Maker. Sermons 75.6.

### **28:4–5 Do Not Be Afraid**

#### **The Angel's Purpose.**

Chrysostom: For what intent and purpose does the angel say to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus"? First to deliver them from dread and then to announce to them the resurrection. He addresses them personally: "I know you seek Jesus who was crucified." By this he treated them with great honor. To be afraid is not for you but for those that crucified Jesus. The contrast here is between the extreme punishment that awaits those who dared to crucify Jesus and the freedom from fear for those who, having repented, sought after him. It was both by his words and by his appearance that the angel brought them deliverance from fear. The brightness of his appearance was such as to bring good news. He went on to say, "I know that you seek Jesus the crucified." Note that he is not ashamed to call him "the crucified." For it is chiefly by his crucifixion that he blesses. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.2.

#### **You Seek Jesus Who Was Crucified.**

Peter Chrysologus: The angel mentions the name of Jesus, alludes to his cross, speaks about his Passion and refers to his death. He then proclaims his resurrection and confesses his lordship. After all the punishment and after the sepulcher, the angel heralds the Lord, speaks of his subjection and sees that the full offense of the Passion has been transmuted into the glory of the resurrection. How could anyone judge that God was lessened by becoming human? Or believe that his power was demeaned by the Passion? Or think that his sovereignty was diminished by his servanthood? The angel speaks worthily of the crucified one. He shows the very place where the Lord's body was laid, lest someone else and not he is believed to have risen from the dead. Sermons 76.1.

## **28:6 He Has Risen, as He Said**

### **He Has Risen.**

Peter Chrysologus: The Lord rises in the same flesh. He brings back the wounds, takes on again the holes from the nails and bears witness by his very body with the signs of his resurrection, which were the ravages of his suffering. If so, how could anyone imagine that he might return in some other body? How could anyone fail to believe that he will return in his own flesh? It is fanciful to think that the servant would by chance disdain his own flesh. Rest assured, my friend, when you arise from the dead it will be you in your own body. Otherwise it would not be you if you should rise in the flesh of another. Sermons 76.1.

### **He Is Not in the Tomb.**

Cyril of Alexandria: So the angel became an evangelist and herald of the resurrection to the women. “Do not seek,” he says, “the one who” always “lives,” who in his own nature is life, “among the dead. He is not here,” that is, dead and in the tomb, “but he has been raised.” He has become a way of ascent to immortality not only for himself but also for us. For this reason he made himself nothing and put on our likeness, that “by the grace of God,” just as the blessed Paul says, “he might taste death on behalf of all.” And so he has become the death of death. Fragment 317.

### **Observe the Place of His Burial.**

Chrysostom: What evidence demonstrates that he has risen? “As he said”—that is, the event is known on the testimony of the angelic visitor. And if you refuse to believe the angel, then remember Jesus’ own words, and you will not hesitate to believe me. The evidence, however, is further presented: “Come and see the place where he lay.” For this purpose the angel had rolled away the stone: that they might see the evidence of his resurrection. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.2.

## **28:7–8 Tell His Disciples**

### **Tell His Disciples He Has Risen.**

Chrysostom: He calls upon them not only to behold the evidence but to attest it further to others: “Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.” The angel here is preparing the women to take the good news to the other disciples. They are to tell of the evidence that made them believe—the empty tomb. Furthermore,

“he is going before you to Galilee.” He says this to relieve them from anxieties and the fear of danger, that their faith not be hindered. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.2.

### **Before You into Galilee.**

Peter Chrysologus: The angel goes on to say, “Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen; and behold, he goes before you into Galilee; you will see him there.” The angel here sends not merely the women but the church in the two women. He sends the one so that by sending her he may spread the news far and wide. Here the angel is sending the bride to the bridegroom. Sermons 76.2.

### **They Ran to Tell the Disciples.**

Chrysostom: Why “with fear and great joy”? They had seen an amazing event. It was beyond all their expectations. The tomb had been empty where they had just before seen him laid. The angel led them to the tomb that they might become witnesses both of his tomb and his resurrection. It is evident that no one could have stolen his body, when so many soldiers were sitting nearby him. Hence he raised up himself. For this reason they rejoiced and stood in awe. The women received the reward of continuing with him. They were first to see and gladly declare not only what had been said to them but also what they themselves had seen. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.2.

### **Both Fear and Joy.**

Augustine: It may be asked how Mark could say, “And going out, they fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid,” whereas Matthew says, “They departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, running to tell his disciples.” The apparent discrepancy between the two accounts is resolved if we understand that the women dared to say nothing either to the angels (that is, to respond to what they had heard from them) or to the guards whom they had seen lying on the ground. For the joy of which Matthew speaks is not opposed to the fear which Mark recounts. We ought to understand that both fear and joy were at once awakened in their minds, even if Matthew had failed to speak of fear. But the question is settled when he says, “They departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy.” Harmony of the Gospels 3.64.

## **28:9–10 Jesus Met Them**

### **First to Receive the Word of Life.**

Hilary of Poitiers: The events during which the small band of women first saw the Lord, were greeted by him, fell to their knees and were commanded to announce the good news to the apostles reverse the order present at the beginning of the world. The gender through which death entered the world would also be the first to receive the glory, vision, fruit and news of the resurrection. The guards, who had seen everything, spurned the glory of the resurrection when they accepted a bribe to lie about the theft of Christ's body. They sold their silence regarding the resurrection in exchange for the honor and pleasure of this world, for its honor is in money. On Matthew 33.9.

### **Eve's Curse Undone.**

Jerome: Two different feelings occupied the minds of the women: fear and joy. Fear came from the magnitude of the miracle they had witnessed and joy from their desire for the resurrection. Nevertheless both feelings impelled their steps. They continued on to the apostles so that through them the seed of faith would be scattered.

"And behold, Jesus met them, saying 'Hail!' " They who sought him out and ran to him deserved to be the first to meet the risen Lord and to hear him say, "Hail." Thus it happened that Eve's curse was undone by these women. Commentary on Matthew 4.28.8–9.

### **Jesus Met Them.**

Peter Chrysologus: While they were going, the Lord "met them" and said, "Hail!" When he meets them, he does not frighten them with his power but comes before them with the ardor of his love. He does not startle them with his authority but greets them warmly. He binds them by the covenant of the bridegroom, not by the right of the ruler. He honors them with the love of a brother. He greets them with a gracious salutation. At one time he had said to his disciples, "Salute no one on the road." So why is it that here along the way this visitor is so quick to salute them? He does not wait to be recognized. He does not demand to be understood. He does not allow himself to be questioned. Rather, he extends this greeting immediately, enthusiastically. He did this because the force of his love overcomes and surpasses all. Furthermore, by doing so Christ himself greets the church. He makes its very heart to be his own and thus receives its body into his own, as the apostle says, "And he is the head of the body, the church." This greeting itself evidently shows that the full figure of the church abides in these women. They are contrasted with those disciples whom Christ scolds who were wavering over the resurrection. He quells

their fears by showing his side and the deep holes from the nails. By taking food, he now restores their faith. Sermons 75.2.

### **They Worship Him.**

Chrysostom: After they had departed with fear and joy, Jesus met them, saying, "Hail!" They ran to him with great joy and gladness. They "took hold of his feet." Thus they received by his touch an irrefutable proof of his resurrection, with full personal assurance of it. And they "worshiped him."

What does he then say? "Do not be afraid." Again, Jesus himself casts out their fear, making room for faith: "Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." Note well how he himself sends good tidings to his disciples by these women. He thereby brings honor to women, as I have so often said, honor to that sex which is most prone to be dishonored. Through these women he brings good hope and the healing of that which was diseased.

Some among you may desire to be like these faithful women. You too may wish to take hold of the feet of Jesus. You can, even now. You can embrace not only his feet but also his hands and even his sacred head. You too can today receive these awesome mysteries with a pure conscience. You can embrace him not only in this life but also even more fully on that day when you shall see him coming with unspeakable glory, with a multitude of the angels. If you are so disposed, along with him, to be compassionate, you shall hear not only these words, "All hail!" but also those others: "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 89.3.

## **28:11 The Guard Told the Priests**

### **The Reports to the Chief Priests.**

Chrysostom: The earthquake occurred for the sake of the soldiers, in order to terrify them and that they might bear testimony to "all that had taken place." This in fact occurred. They reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. The testimony came from the guards themselves. As such it was free from suspicion. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

## **28:12–13 Paying for a Lie**

### **The Bribery of the Soldiers.**

Chrysostom: Some of these signs were displayed publicly to the world, others privately to those present on the spot. Some of these events were displayed publicly for the world that was in darkness. Some were

displayed privately, as the appearance of the angel. So truth shines forth, proclaimed even by its adversaries. For when the guards came forward to attest these actual events, the priests gave them money, so that they might pretend that a fraud had occurred. "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.'" The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

### **The Purchase of a Lie.**

Chrysostom: How could they have stolen him? O most foolish of all men! They can't even lie plausibly! The conspicuousness of the truth highlights their falsehood. For indeed what they said after the bribe was extremely farfetched. Their falsehood did not even have the ring of plausibility.

For how, I ask, could the disciples have stolen him? They were poor and unlearned. They were hiding out at this time, not even venturing to show themselves.

Remember that a mandated seal had been placed upon the tomb. How could it be ignored that there were many watchmen, soldiers and Jewish authorities stationed around the sepulcher? These very authorities were already suspicious of just such a thing happening! They themselves had sought to prevent this very contingency! They were anxious to avoid just this! The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

### **Say, "They Stole His Body While We Were Asleep."**

Chrysostom: Further, for what motive might these poor disciples have stolen the body? That they might feign the doctrine of the resurrection? On what premise might it have entered into their minds to pretend such a thing? These were men were hiding out to simply stay alive.

And how could they have removed the huge stone that had made the burial secure? Even if they had somehow moved it, how could they have escaped the observation of so many? The premise is implausible. They would not have attempted such a desperate move. Such a venture would have proved fruitless.

In fact, the disciples were themselves quite afraid; they were far from bold. The evidence shows that they had all rushed away from Jesus the moment they saw him seized. If then at that time they did not dare so much as to stand their ground when they saw him alive, how when he was dead could they have had the courage to withstand such a number of soldiers? Do you think they might have escaped notice? How could they have burst through the circle of defenders? It would have taken many hands to remove such a great stone that had sealed the tomb. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

## **28:14 Satisfying the Governor**

### **If This Comes to the Governor's Ears.**

Chrysostom: They were correct in saying earlier that "the last fraud will be worse than the first." They were in effect making this declaration against themselves. After so much violent conduct they ought to have repented, but rather they strove to outdo their former lunacies, feigning absurd fictions. When he was alive, they purchased his blood. When he was dead and risen again, they again by money were striving to undermine the evidence of his resurrection. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

### **We Will Keep You Out of Trouble.**

Peter Chrysologus: Among these misdeeds, we find the priests bribing people and, what is worse, deceiving them by pointing falsely to the misdeeds of others. Meanwhile they were putting a price on sin. They paid money to cover up their manipulations. They buy out Judas who betrayed his Lord. They compensate with money the blood of the Savior of the world. They try to shut up faith in the empty tomb by purchasing silence. With petty theft they deal in the greater crime of denying the resurrection. "They gave a sum of money to the soldiers and said, 'Tell people, "His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep." And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.' So they took the money and did as they were directed; and this story has been spread among the Jews to this day." Among the Christians too. What they covered up with gold in Judea would shine brightly and intensely over the whole world. The disciples received Christ; they did not steal him. You purchased treachery, but you did not steal the truth. Christ rose from the dead. You lost money. Sermons 76.4.

## **28:15 Spreading the Story**

### **They Took the Money.**

Jerome: The guards acknowledged the miracle, returned to the city quickly and described to the chief priest what they had witnessed. Those who should have turned, repented and sought out the resurrected Jesus continued instead in their wickedness. They converted the money which had been given to the temple into a bribe for their falsehood, just as they had earlier given thirty pieces of silver to Judas, the betrayer. Everyone therefore who diverts the offerings given to the temple or to the church for other

purposes, namely, the satisfaction of his own will, is like these scribes and chief priests who purchased a lie and bought the blood of the Savior. Commentary on Matthew 4.28.14.

### **To This Day.**

Chrysostom: See how their own actions trap them everywhere in their own devices. For if they had not come to Pilate or asked for the guard, they would have been more able to act in this impudent fashion. But as it was, they did ask for a guard. Indeed, as though they were laboring to shut their own mouths, they took these precautions themselves. If the disciples did not even have the fortitude to watch with him for an hour while he prayed, even when he scolded them, how would they then have had the strength to venture upon such a desperate enterprise? Don't be foolish. If the disciples had any thought of stealing his body, they would have done so before he was buried and sealed in the tomb. They would have acted before a guard was placed at the tomb on the first night, when it might have been done in greater security and with less danger.... But remember on that night none of the disciples were present at the tomb. They were scattered in hiding! The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.1.

### **28:16–17 The Disciples See Jesus in Galilee**

#### **But Some Doubted.**

Chrysostom: This seems to me to be the last appearance in Galilee, when he sent them out to baptize. And if "some doubted," herein again admire the Evangelists' truthfulness. Even up to the last day, they were determined not to conceal even their own shortcomings. Nevertheless even these are assured by what they see. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.2.

### **28:18–20 I Am with You Always**

#### **The Great Commission.**

Jerome: "Jesus approached them and said, 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.' " This authority was given to one who had just been crucified, buried in a tomb, laid dead and afterwards had arisen. Authority was given to him in both heaven and earth so that he who once reigned in heaven might also reign on earth through the faith of his believers.

" 'Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' " First they teach all nations; then they baptize those they have taught with water, for the body is not able to receive the sacrament of baptism before the soul has received the truth of the faith.



They were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit so that the three who are one in divinity might also be one in giving themselves. The name of the Trinity is the name of the one God.

“‘Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you.’” What a marvelous sequence this is. He commanded the apostles first to teach all nations and then to baptize them in the sacrament of faith and then, after faith and baptism, to teach them to observe all that he had commanded. Lest we think these commandments of little consequence or few in number, he added “all that I have commanded you,” so that those who were to believe and be baptized in the Trinity would observe everything they had been taught. Commentary on Matthew 4.28.18–20.

### **Go, Make Disciples of All Nations.**

Chrysostom: What does he finally say to them when he sees them? “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” He is still speaking to them according to his humanity, for they had not yet received the Spirit which was able to raise them to higher things. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” He gives them one charge with a view toward teaching and another charge concerning his commandments. He makes no mention of the future of the Jews. He does not scold Peter for his denial or any one of the others for their flight. Having put into their hands a summary of Christian teaching, which is expressed in the form of baptism, he commands them to go out into the whole world. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.2.

### **As If to One Body.**

Chrysostom: After that, because he had enjoined on them great things, to raise their courage he reassures them that he will be with them always, “even to the end of the world.” Now do you see the relation of his glory to his previous condescension? His own proper power is again restored. What he had said previously was spoken during the time of his humiliation.

He promised to be not only with these disciples but also with all who would subsequently believe after them. Jesus speaks to all believers as if to one body. Do not speak to me, he says, of the difficulties you will face, for “I am with you,” as the one who makes all things easy. Remember that this is also said repeatedly to the prophets in the Old Testament. Recall Jeremiah objecting that he is too young and Moses and Ezekiel shrinking from the prophet’s office. “I am with you” is spoken to all these people. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.2.

**To the Close of the Age.**

Chrysostom: Observe the excellence of those who were sent out into the whole world. Others who were called found ways of excusing themselves. But these did not beg off.

Jesus reminds his disciples of the consummation of all things. He seeks to draw them further on, that they may not look at the present dangers only but also at the good things to come that last forever. He is in effect saying, "These difficult things that you will undergo are soon to be finished with this present life. For this world will come to an end. But the good things you are to enjoy are immortal, as I have often told you before." Having invigorated and roused their minds by the remembrance of that coming day, he sent them out. Those who live faithfully, with good works, should strangely desire that day even as those who lack good works should fear it.

So let us not fear and shudder. Let us repent while there is opportunity. Let us rise out of our sins. We can by grace, if we are willing. The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 90.2.