**“The Lord Today Also” Apr. 16, 2017**

**Matt 28:1-10 Pr. H. Adachi**

May the people in the sanctuary be filled with Grace and Peace of the Lord, our savior and the Lord!

How was your Holy Week? I was preparing Maundy Thursday sermon, Translation of Pastor Brad’s Good Friday sermon, today’s sermon, and also Thursday last week was the due for all the notebook materials of Synod Assembly from May 11 through 13. While doing those thing, I was bothered by several breaking news….

The beginning was the news about Assad’s chemical weapon to the civilians… Then a few days later, United States where we are living launched missiles to the military base for Syria.  However, Syrian government and also Russian’s were broadcasting that the news that Assad’s chemical weapon was not true…

For amateurs, we do not know what is true, but I am feeling that the world’s political picture is getting worse and worse day by day. Considering what we are hearing about North Korea, peaceful cities now could be chaotic war places even very quickly.

I wondered why we were listening to such kind of news during Holy Week. Reflection upon the process when Jesus was going to be crucified, the situation became worse very quickly.

The situation that Mary Magdalene  and the other Mary had experienced 2000 years ago before Jesus crucified might be something similar to what we are experiencing right now. With high expectations and hope, Jesus entered into Jerusalem.  But the situation got to worse even in a week. All citizens requested Jesus’ crucifixion and executed. The conclusion was Jesus’ death, and he was buried.

For the women, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, they wondered why the conclusion was death. Although they followed Jesus for 3 years, they wondered if all things they saw might have been just a dream. Most probably they wanted to confirm that the scene they saw for three years and believed that Jesus was the Lord was not real and he was really died. Then probably they wanted to see the real body for them to anoint his dead body with oil.

However, the story did not end with the tomb where Jesus was buried. When they approached to the tomb, there was the great earthquake. Then the angel appeared and talked to them: Do not be afraid, Jesus was risen and will go to the Galilee.

I wonder if they still could not believe because it was so unrealistic and they did not see the resurrected Jesus yet. Therefore I think their fear continued. The text described: “they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy.” Even though it says “great joy” but still they feared. They were in mixed feelings, and they were not 100% joyful.

Then the incident happened that they were freed from those mixed feelings. While they were rushing to tell the disciples, Jesus appeared.

Although they were running, but Jesus stood in front of them and said his greetings.  Since they were in hurry, in the beginning they might felt someone was bothering them… But the someone was Jesus.

The word he said was so meaningful.  Although English translation says “greetings” and Japanese translation says “good morning” but the original Greek Bible used the word ”chairete.”  Have you ever heard the meaning of the word?

Original meaning of this word is “be joying”.  Jesus knew exactly what two Marys were feeling, who could not believe the resurrection 100%, and still feared and could not be joyful 100%. So Jesus stood in front of them in order to say, “Be Joyful, do not be afraid.”

This year, what is the resurrection story telling us, the 21st Christian? Are not we feeling the same mixed feelings that two Marys had?

Many of us were baptized and gathering every Sunday, because Jesus resurrects Sundays.   However, we are not really rejoicing 100 percent because many of us just recognized the resurrection as history that was happened 2000 years ago. The incident that Jesus stood in front of two Marys and said “Be joyful! Do not be afraid.” did not complete 2000 years ago.

In the churches of Christ that have been lasting 2000 years so far, as resurrected Jesus told us, people were baptized and receive the sacraments, the body and blood of Jesus Christ on Sundays. Whenever we are rushing in our lives or troubled by something and worrying about something, like Jesus stood in front of two Marys, Sundays stand in the midst of our lives.

And when the baptized Christians believe that the presence of Jesus Christ in the sacraments and receive them, today also, Jesus says “Be Joying. Do not be afraid,” and comes to our lives. Then we are sent to our daily lives together with Jesus.  Amen.