

By MONSIGNOR HART

## The Universal Truth

Two thousand years ago recorded the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. There were witnesses to the fact that three days after His death Christ's tomb was empty. He had been buried in a new sepulchre hewed out of the solid rock. A great stone had been rolled against the door of the tomb. A guard of Roman soldiers had been set outside the tomb.

Three days later, early on Sunday morning, the Holy Women had come to anoint the body and prepare it for permanent burial. The women had reported to the Apostles the fact that the tomb was empty. Peter and John came and they found the Angel of the Resurrection within the tomb. "You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him."

After the fear and the rejoicing with which the Apostles and the Holy Women greeted the news of the Resurrection; after the lies with which Christ's enemies strove to deny the fact of His Resurrection, the truth gradually spread among all the followers of Christ who welcomed His appearance that they might adore Him.

It became known with all certainty to the enemies of Christ, who were willing to spend large sums of money, that the soldiers might be bribed into saying that at night when men were asleep His disciples came and stole the body from the tomb. The early evangelists were able to record this lying attempt and to state that even up to that day, the day of the writing of the Gospels, the early lies still continued to spread among the people.

But despite the feeble attempt of lying men who were ready with money to bribe the Apostles, we have the testimony of the Angel of the Resurrection, the testimony of Mary Magdalene to whom Our Lord turned; the testimony of those devoted men who had been with Him to the death and were ready to testify to the fact, not only of His Resurrection from the tomb, but of the several occasions right up to the Ascension in which the Risen Christ had appeared to them.

## After Two Thousand Years

Two thousand years have gone by and into the whole world there has come the undeniable evidence of the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. Men are still found to lie about Christ and to deny the fact of His Resurrection from the dead, but Christ has appeared to His Apostles, to the Holy Women and to more than five hundred at once. Only those who were willing to pay money to purchase the lying statements of the guards of soldiers, and their successors in our day, who still believe in the potency of a lie, are lined up as witnesses not against the Resurrection but against the readiness of wicked men to give testimony to the known truth.

Truth is eternal. The passing of the years has brought forth no true testimony against the Resurrection, but those years have continued to bring forth more and more outstanding testimony to the fact that Christ is Risen from the dead. It was but one of a series of miracles performed by the Risen Christ in the institution of His Church, in the spreading of His doctrine and in the sending of His Apostles into the far places of the earth.

His Church was first an institution including only a few score men but it has in the course of the years spread itself to every race of mankind. The silly attempt of sinful men to spread the false report concerning the appearance of Christ after His death; the very money which these ignorant and foolish men gave to the soldiers to bribe them to say that while men were asleep the Apostles came and stole the body, remain to indicate to all that it was only the most far-fetched of lies that could lead men anywhere to reject the patent truth of Christ's Resurrection and to turn to the sleeping eyes of trained guards to report something which seeing eyes could never and reason to report.

The witnesses of the Resurrection, the Apostles and the Holy Women and the more than five hundred at once were not sleeping; their eyes were not closed; they needed no bribe to report gladly what their eyes had seen.

## Chosen Witnesses

Undoubtedly Christ had appeared to a great multitude of people. These witnesses were chosen ones. The Christ who had power to rise from the dead also had power to place honest men and good men and intelligent men where they could be lasting witnesses to the truth of His Resurrection. The infinite wisdom that enabled Christ to plan the Resurrection and the Divine Power which enabled Him to bring it about remain as constant support to the truth of His Resurrection from the dead.

The 2000 years that have come and gone since Christ rose from the dead have each one of them added a new strength and a renewed testimony to the definite and clear report of the greatest fact that his world has ever known. Into all the world this testimony has gone and in the number of people who have come to a knowledge of it, and the number of places in which knowledge of it has penetrated, it has become among all the facts of recorded history the one great and eternal truth that can never be denied. Christ rose from the dead. His Resurrection has become the most clearly attested truth that the world has ever known.

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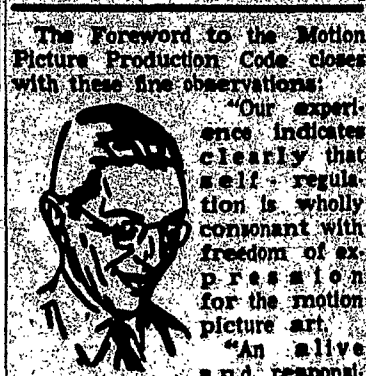
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## JOSEPH BREIG

What's Good For the Movies?



The Foreword to the Motion Picture Production Code, with these few observations, says Breig:

"Our experience indicates clearly that self-regulation is wholly consonant with freedom of expression for the motion picture art. 'An alive and responsive public opinion is the guiding force in this as in all systems of self-government.'"

"The motion picture public is not millions more or less conditioned to the suggestive and the sensational. It is a universal public attracted to the motion picture theater by a vast variety of clean and artistic entertainment."

Thus speaks the Foreword to the Code. The movie public does not consist of those "conditioned to the suggestive and the sensational."

On the contrary, the movies will prosper insofar as they provide "a vast variety of clean and artistic entertainment."

So say the producers themselves, through their Motion Picture Association of America. Is what they say true?

I think it is. The top money-maker movies have always, or almost always, been clean entertainment, and sometimes artistic as well.

IF YOU WANT to know what can happen to an art form diseased, degenerate, unhealthy and/or silly, mind get into the academy, look at the legitimate theater.

Or look at art. The indifference of the public is colossal. The people stay away, as the old stage expression has it, in droves.

They stay away when any art deteriorates, whether the deterioration be moral or artistic—or both.

"The public truly does not consist—not for very long—in those 'more or less conditioned to the suggestive and the sensational.'"

That kind of stuff attracts crowds for the short run. But it sells rapidly.

PERHAPS I AM not typical. But maybe, on the other hand, I am not entirely unrepresentative of my fellow human beings.

At any rate, let me tell you about some questions that I have been asking myself for several years:

Why have I (and my wife and many of our friends) virtually ceased going to the movies?

Why have I and so many other people, lost from the radio audience also to the point where it seldom occurs to us any longer to switch on a radio, unless there is some great public emergency?

And why am I losing almost all interest in television?

TAKE THAT MATTER of television. I find myself not at all unusual. Into whatever home I go, I discover that people are more or less abandoning TV. The children watch; the adults don't. And even the children are growing less interested. Why?

Can't every reader answer for himself? Has not television proved itself, by and large, to be so empty, and of such low quality, that it is gradually boring us stiff?

Aren't games coming back into the home? The sale of games is increasing remarkably.

OR TAKE RADIO. How many adults listen to radio nowadays? Once in a blue moon, I turn on the radio in my automobile, search from station to station for a few minutes, and turn it off.

Yet I was once a loyal member of the radio audience. What happened?

Why, the good music nearly vanished, and was replaced with dreadful tripe dished out by disc jockeys carefully schooled in frenzied inebriety, by raucous announcers who bellow as if we had all gone deaf, and by "commercials" which would hurt the intelligence and the sensitivity of a cannibal.

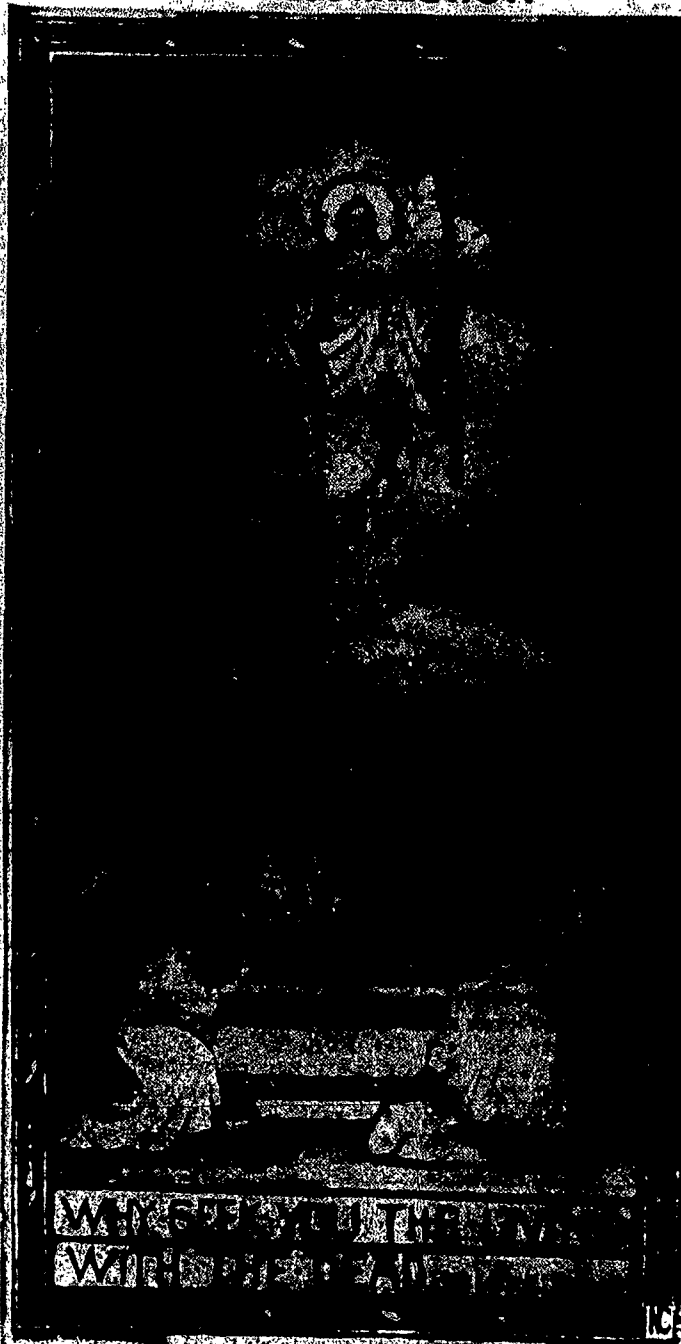
"The motion picture public... is a universal public attracted... by... clean and artistic entertainment."

Radio forgot that; and radio lost a great portion of its public. TV is forgetting it, and TV is waning. If the movies forget it, they will be in far worse straits in the future than they are at present.

## Memorial Clinic

Washington (NC)—A \$150,000 check was presented by the Philip Murray Memorial Foundation, Inc., to officials of the new Providence Hospital here for the establishment of a clinic to be named for the late union leader.

## THE RESURRECTION



## A Doctor At Calvary He Willed To Die

By Pierre Barbet, M.D.

Selected from the book A DOCTOR AT CALVARY—The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ as Described by a Surgeon. F. J. Kennedy & Sons, Publishers. March selection of the Catholic Book Club. All rights reserved.

He died when He willed to do so. I wish to hear of no more physiological theories!

Oh yes, Lord, may you be blessed for having truly willed to die. For there was nothing we could do. With a sigh, Your head dropped slowly towards me, with Your chin above the breastbone. I can see Your face straight before me. It is now relaxed and calm, and in spite of its dreadful stigmata, it is illuminated by the gentle majesty of God, Who is always present there.

I have thrown myself on my knees before You, kissing Your pierced feet, from which the blood is still flowing, though it is coagulating at the tips. The rigor mortis has seized You in brutal fashion, like a stag run down in the chase. Your legs are as hard as steel... and burning. What unheard-of temperature has given You this terrible spasm?

THERE HAS BEEN an earthquake; what is that to me? And the sun has undergone an eclipse. Joseph has gone to ask Pilate for Your body, and he will not be refused. The latter hates the Jews, who have forced Him to kill You; that writing above Your head proclaims his horror for all to see: "Jesus, King of the Jews," has been crucified like a slave! The centurion has gone to make his report, and the brave man has proclaimed You to be truly the Son of God.

We are going to lower You, and it will be easy, once the nail has been taken out of the feet. Joseph and Nicodemus will unfasten the beam of the stripes. John, Your beloved disciple, will bear Your feet; with two others we will support Your loins, using a sheet twisted to make a rope. The shroud is ready, on this stone nearby, in front of the sepulchre; and there, taking their time, they will remove the nails from Your hands. But who is this?

Oh, yes, the Jews have asked Pilate to clear the hill of these gibbets which offend the eye and would defile tomorrow's feast. Some soldiers break the legs of the two thieves, giving them great blows with an iron bar. They now hang miserably, and as they can no longer raise themselves on the ropes binding their legs, tetanus and asphyxiation will soon have finished them.

But this does not apply to You—"You shall not break a bone of Him."

Can you not leave us in peace? Cannot you see He is dead?—No doubt, they say. But what is this idea that one of them has? With an exact and tragic gesture he has raised the shaft of the lance and with one blow upwards on the right side, he drives it in deep. But why? "And immediately there came out blood and water."

John truly saw it, and I also, and we would not lie: a broad stream of dark liquid blood, which gushed out on to the soldier, and slowly flowed in dribbles over the chest, coagu-

lating in successive layers. But at the same time, and specially noticeable at the edges, there flows a clear liquid like water. Let us see, the wound is below and to the outside of the nipple (the fifth space); and the blow from below, it is therefore the blood from the right auricle, and the water, issued from the pericardium. But then, O poor Jesus, Your heart was compressed by this liquid, and apart from everything else You had the agonizing cruel pain of Your heart being held as in a vice.

Had we not already seen enough? Was it so that we should know this, that this man performed this odd aggressive act? The Jews might also have made out that You were not dead but had fainted; Your resuscitation needed this testimony. Thank you, soldiers, thank you; long live, one day, you will die as a Christian martyr.

And now, reader, let us thank God Who has given me the strength to write this to the end, though not without tears! All these horrible pains that we have lived in Him, we have foreseen by Him all through His life. He premeditated them and willed them, out of His love, so that He might redeem us from our sins.

He was offered because it was His own will! He directed the whole of His passion, without avoiding one torture, accepting the physiological consequences, without being dominated by them. He died when and how and because He willed it.

JESUS IS IN agony till the end of time. It is right, it is good to suffer with Him and to thank Him when He sends us pain, to associate ourselves with His. We have, as St. Paul writes, to complete what is lacking in the passion of Christ, and with Mary, His Mother, and our Mother, to accept our fellow-suffering fraternally and with joy.

O Jesus, You Who had no pity on Yourself, You Who are God, have pity on me who am a sinner.

LAUS CRISTO  
Doctor Pierre Barbet,  
Surgeon at the Hospital  
St. Joseph, Paris.

## Chaplain Killed In Indo-Chinese War

LYONS, France (NC)—Father Minot, chaplain of the Saigon garrison in Indo-China and assistant to the chief chaplain of French forces in that country, has died in the military hospital here.

He is the eleventh Catholic chaplain to die as a result of the Indo-Chinese war. In addition, three chaplains have been taken prisoner by the communist-led Vietnamese forces.

## You Can Win Converts

"Soldier In Christ"

By

Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.  
John W. Quinn, of the Basilica of St. Mary's parish in Minneapolis, helped two of the soldiers in his squad, as well as his fiancée to find their way into the true Church of Jesus Christ.

The two soldiers are now happily married to Catholics, and are raising fine families and can't ever sufficiently thank the man who was kind enough to assist them when they needed a bit of counsel and a helping hand.

"Oto Hoffman was a sergeant," said John, "in my squad at Dalhart, Texas, in the early part of the war. He must have noticed that I was among the Catholic boys who went to Mass at the chapel on Sunday mornings and also attended the services on Monday night. So he came to me and said that he was engaged to a Catholic girl back in New Jersey and would like to learn about the Catholic religion."

"WE GOT together night after night and I went over all the essential teachings of our Faith with him, so he had a pretty good grasp of it by the time he went home on furlough to get married. The priest there gave him a few additional instructions, and he was able to be received into the Church shortly before his wedding. When he returned to the camp he was very happy over his new-found Faith and went regularly with me to Mass."

"Splendid John!" I said. "Who was the other soldier you helped?"

"That was Edward A. Degh-roony. He was a boy of Armenian descent from St. Louis, and was engaged to a Catholic girl there. We were then stationed at Ardmore, Oklahoma. I explained the Catholic Faith to Eddie and two other boys in my squad—Bill O'Dea from Washington, D.C., and John Spain from St. Louis—and lent a hand. Then I took him to the chapel for the finishing off process and he was baptized."

"On the day of his baptism the chaplain said to me, John, can you hold Eddie up off the floor while I pour the water on him? But as Eddie weighed about 170 pounds, I demurred. The chaplain laughed and said, 'Well, I guess I can manage it if Eddie will just bend his head over the font.' I served as Eddie's godfather."

"FOUR YEARS later I flew down to St. Louis to attend the National Guard Convention and saw Eddie and his family. They had one little girl then and another babe was on the way. I could see how much their Faith meant to Eddie and his wife and how fervent they were in its practice."

"I'd be interested, John, in learning how you helped your own fiancée into the fold."

"I met Betty after I was discharged from the army in 1945. I was living in the screen in our front porch in the spring of that year when she passed by my home in New Richmond, Wisconsin. She lived only half a block away but I had been away for five years and didn't know her. My brother Harry stopped her and they had a little chat. Then I was introduced and soon we were going together."

"TRAGICALLY I went to the University of Wisconsin and the next summer took a job with Western Electric in St. Paul. Betty's father, who was a minister, died and her mother moved to Minneapolis. Thus we were able to see one another quite often. My sister Alice was married and lived in Minneapolis. Betty and I waited for quite a while before we decided to marry. Alice and I were married in the Basilica and Betty and I went with her. It was a good refresher course for both of us."

"Betty asked me a lot of questions for which I had to dig to find the answers. Finally she got a clear and complete picture of the Faith and saw that it was the one founded by Christ and authorized by Him to teach all mankind."

"Betty was baptized that summer by Father Fee and received from him her First Holy Communion. She was radiantly happy. We were married in October by Monsignor Reardon in the Basilica and now—a little over three years later—we are expecting our first baby in May. Betty is so glad she took the instructions before marriage so we could both receive Holy Communion together on our wedding day."

"John," I said, "if we had more zealous laymen like you we would bring the blessings and joys of our Holy Faith to millions of charless people each year. You were a soldier for your country and you're a soldier for Christ as well."

## CHURCH MUSIC

## New Easter Vigil

By REV. BENEDICT EHMANN

On February 9, 1951, Pope Pius XII issued a decree restoring the Easter Vigil to its proper place on Holy Saturday night and at the same time introducing into it some

rather extensive changes which make the Rite an almost new service, much more interesting and much closer to the people. It was granted "an experimentum" for that one year, and it was optional for the Bishops to grant permission. In the meantime, the Holy Saturday morning service might continue to be used, in which case the regular Rite in the Mass, and not the new Rite was to be followed.

On January 11 of the next year, another decree extended the optional use of the Easter Vigil for three years. This week's Holy Saturday is the last of the three for which this extension gives authority. We shall be awaiting with interest what further action the Holy See will take.

ONE THING is certain: Pope Pius XII attaches tremendous importance to the restoration of the Easter Vigil. The opening words of the Decree bear eloquent witness to this. The matter is described as being "of great importance" (of great moment or importance). Besides the desire of bringing the Holy Saturday celebration back to its "original splendor," the change is recommended by special pastoral considerations, "peculiarly pastoral" since a nighttime Rite will enable many more people to be present than now on Holy Saturday morning.

This pastoral concern of the Holy Father is borne out in the changes he has introduced into the new Rite. All of them are for the people, either to bring the service closer to them or to make it simpler and more meaningful for them. And, unless I am mistaken, it is the first instance in which the rubrics give direction for the participating faithful. They are, as far as it is possible, to be outdoors with the priest for the blessing of the new fire. They are to march with him at their head, into the darkened church. They are to hold lighted candles during the singing of the Exsultet song. They are directed to sing the psody throughout the service, and to include the litany of the Saints and the proclamation of the Alleluia.

If the baptism is not large enough to hold them all, the baptismal water is to be blessed in the sanctuary, in full sight of the congregation, "coram populo." After the blessing of the water and the baptizing of the catechumens, the water is carried back to the font processionally and there increased, while a chanter sings for the waiting congregation the psalm about the deer that yearns for the running waters.

UPON THE return from the baptism, the priest leads the entire assembly in a renewal of baptismal vows, everyone holding lighted candles. The new Rite places here a most moving and beautiful exhortation, to be given in the vernacular, concerning the meaning of our baptismal life. After the people have made their renewal, they are sprinkled by the celebrant with the newly blessed Easter water.

In the Directions accompanying the Decree for the new Rite, pastors are instructed to prepare their flock during the Lenten season, "congruam instructionem," that is, "with fitting lessons," for the fruitful celebration of the holy Easter Vigil, and especially for the solemn renewal of the baptismal promises.

So pronounced, and extensive is this emphasis upon the people and their role in the service of the new Rite that it must be regarded as a significant development in the development of the Rite toward an ever greater "active participation" of the faithful in the celebration of the sacred mysteries and in the public prayer of the Church, which the Blessed Pius X declared to be "the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

Pius X brought the Catholic people back to the Eucharist, giving them a far more frequent, intimate and active part in that holy Feast of love which the Lord bequeathed to the Church on Holy Thursday night. And in our own recent times Pius XII is endeavoring to bring them back to an active, profound and influential awareness of, and sharing in, the Risen Life of the crucified Jesus, that "Life comes to us in baptism."

THE TENTH Pius is remembered gratefully with many titles, and none more widely and affectionately repeated than "Pope of the Eucharist." It would be premature to assert by what titles the twelfth Pius will be named in future generations: his achievements have been manifold and diverse. But the restoration of the Easter Vigil, like his prede-

cessor's restoration of early and frequent Communion and of the people's participation in the Mass, is so freighted with immense fruit for the future, that, on the strength of this one reform, he is being likened to Pope St. Gregory the Great.

Perhaps nothing could bring this home to people as impressively as to quote the text of the allocution which the new Rite directs shall be addressed to the people immediately before they renew their baptismal promises.

"On this most hallowed night, dearly beloved brethren, Holy Mother Church, calling to mind the death and burial of Our Lord Jesus Christ, keeps watch by loving Him in return; and, celebrating His glorious resurrection, she rejoices exceedingly."

SINCE THEN, as the Apostle teaches us, we are buried together with Christ by Baptism unto death, so, just as Christ has risen from the dead, we also must walk in newness of life; knowing that our old self has been crucified with Christ; that we are no longer to be slaves to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"For this reason, beloved brethren, having completed the Lenten practices, let us renew those promises of our Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works, together with the world which is an enemy to God, and by which we promised to serve God faithfully in the Holy Catholic Church."

If such word mean little or nothing to us, then everything else about Easter is a mocking frivolity or a shallow make-believe. If our Catholic thinking does not hinge upon this master thought, it lacks genuine apostolic fire and conviction, and even our Communion will not do us any good, for it is a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. But with the engagement and identification with the Crucified and Risen Saviour, a new vitality will energize the Church, and once again, like the early Christians of the martyr Church or like today's Christians of the Church of Silence, we shall go forth to bear witness and to conquer. ALLELUIA shall once again become what it really meant to be, a living song of Easter victory.

## Sunday Sermon

By Mgr. Hart

## THREE GREAT DAYS

Friday from three o'clock on, all through Saturday, and into the early hours of Sunday morning, found the body of Christ in the tomb in the Garden of the Resurrection. It was a new tomb, hewed out of solid rock.

Christ was the first to be buried in this tomb, but no matter how well the work of preparing the tomb was done, no matter how much thought and time the artisan had given, it was not to serve as the last resting place for the Body of Christ. Christ was to rest in it only three days, and a few short hours on Sunday.

Yet of all the tombs in all the world this one was to be known in more places and to more people than any other tomb. It was to be famous not because it was the last resting place of its occupant but rather because from this tomb was to come forth, newly risen to life, the Saviour of mankind.

THREE GREAT DAYS! Joseph of Arimathea took care of the burial. Complete preparations were impossible because of the shortness of time. The Sabbath Day had its own regulations to forbid any Jew from visiting a tomb or dealing with a dead body; so those who were close to Christ planned to return in the early hours of Sunday to anoint the body of Jesus and give it its final preparation for permanent entombment.

And now early on Sunday morning we find the Holy Women buying the spices needed for the burial and starting out for the tomb. They knew they would need help, for a very large stone rested as a door against the opening of the sepulchre. They saw the stone had been rolled away. They found that the tomb was empty; they found the Angel of the Resurrection on guard at the right side of the tomb; they learned from him that Christ was risen and they hastened back to Jerusalem to report the fact to the Apostles.

The Apostles verified the message of the Holy Women and then started out for Galilee where they would see the Risen Christ and have opportunity to adore Him.