

Homily based on the readings from April 7, 2026 (Acts 2.36-41; John 20.11-18)

About twenty years ago, it was fairly common to hear the *ludicrous* assertion that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were, in fact, husband and wife. Although this kind of nonsense has existed since the earliest days of the Church, this particular version was probably inspired by *The Da Vinci Code* – a vapid and cynical novel that was first published in 2003. All sorts of public figures, including allegedly respectable journalists, were enthusiastically making the case for this purported connection. This silliness eventually subsided – in part, because there can be no evidence for an event that never occurred – but mostly because the secular world essentially lost all interest in Christianity.

There is a lesson to be learned here – although it is not really about Jesus and Mary Magdalene. While the prospect of discovering a covert liaison is always exciting, the main reason people were so *enthralled* by this fabrication was that they no longer possessed an authentic understanding

of love itself. This confusion is a symptom of a deeper affliction – the widespread rejection of the *spiritual* in favor of the purely *physical*. To be blunt, that is why our society can no longer distinguish between *love* and *sexuality*. The issue is not that people are confused by the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene – it is that they are no longer able to recognize *love* in the first place.

What we see in today's Gospel reading, of course, is one of the purest and most powerful examples of love in human history. The relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene is not the love between two spouses – but a deep and abiding connection that transcends the cares and concerns of our earthly existence. The love of a husband and wife – although beautiful and holy – is fundamentally rooted in *this* world. As Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Luke:

[T]he children of *this* age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to

the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. (20.34-35)

The purpose of Christ's life, death, and Resurrection is not to bind us to *this* world, but to prepare us for our true homeland in the *next*.

The reason these lies about Christ's so-called "marriage" are so contemptible is that they *conceal* the love he has for *all* men and women. Married love, by its very definition, must be *exclusive* – but the love of Jesus Christ knows no such restrictions. No individual, no matter how profoundly she is devoted to Jesus, has the sole claim to being the bride of Christ – because *that* is a title that belongs to *all* of us. We have *all* been invited to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, because we are *all* members of his One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. That is the promise of Easter, which all of us have the duty and the joy to proclaim – until that glorious day when Christ himself comes to receive us into his loving embrace.