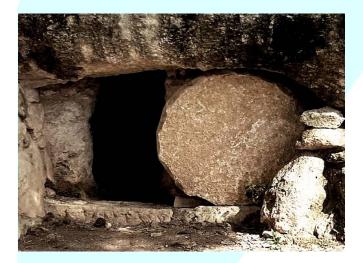


## Do Not Cling To Me

by Erin Davis, MSW, LCSW

There is an emptiness beyond sadness; a deep well that I have fallen into. The sunlight sprays in during the day, just enough to keep hope alive, but by night despair takes it hostage. I try to gather words or meaning, but they all fall short. I don't understand-why did the Rabbi have to go? He left and it seems like for nothing-to die a criminal's death?



These thoughts plague me as I journey to the cave where his body lies. As I approach, I see the boulder has been moved. That's strange, was someone anticipating me coming? I peer inside, holding my breath. Why am I so afraid of what I'll find? Oddly enough, I find nothing-damp, black nothingness. A wave of confusion rolls through my insides and beads of sweat form on my brow. What is this? I step in a bit closer because I see something limp on the ground. I pick up a pile of cloth-bloodied and dirty.

Fear begins to form and I'm paralyzed. What has happened to the Rabbi? I need to know. I have to see him. This empty tomb is full of darkness and death-it holds nothing for me. Have I not died enough in this life already? This man finally brought me hope, and now he's dead and missing.

I'm startled out of my trance by the gardener shuffling around. I demand to know what he's seen-

- Continued on Page 2 -

Reflection taken from the Mar | Apr 2018 issue of *PRESSING ON*, a Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center Chicago Christian Counseling Center has locations throughout Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana

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## Continued from Page 1

desperately reaching for some crumb to satiate my fear. The gardener pauses and says my name with familiarity...''Mary.'' I feel a knot loosen in my gut and I turn to look upon the gardener. Bewildered, I cry out "RABBI?!'' Is it really him? "I'm here, he says, I'm alive...but you must not cling to me.''

My countenance drops-this feels like a death sentence. What do you mean not cling to you?! Clinging to you is the only thing I have-it's what holds me together. Do not cling to me?! What is it you are asking of me? My insides tighten up again. I don't want to let Him go. Life has opened up for me since I met him. It feels like He is dying all over again. I just found him and now I have to let go. It feels like falling, yet a part of me knows it must be done.



I will go back. I will tell the others He is alive...but I'm realizing what I must do. I have to keep living. I have to trust this moment. I have to rise and take a step. This feels new-like I'm leaving something behind. My hope has not died after all-I will let go and step out of the tomb. So for today, just one step.

Erin Davis is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and sees clients in our Oak Park, IL location.

This reflection is based on the following Bible passage: John 20:1-18

An invitation to reflect...

This reflection came about from a desire to understand the humanity of the stories in the Bible. Often, I would read scripture looking for a promise of certainty to stand on, instead of as an invitation to reflect. When I see the humanity of the experiences of Mary or even of Jesus, the words take on new life and meaning. I begin to explore, question and discover more in myself and my experience with God. When I read these with clients, I use them as tools of exploration...to notice what God is eliciting in them. What do they feel in their bodies, or what word or phrase jumped out at them? ~ Erin Davis MSW LCSW

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