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## *The Call to Watch, the Call to Witness*

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**The Cathedral of St. Philip**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**  
**March 28, 2010**  
**11:15 am**  
**Palm Sunday**  
**Luke 22:14-23:56**

Why was it my call to watch?  
I have asked myself that question so many times.  
All of us women had to ask it at one time or another.  
Mary Magdalene, Joanna, myself, and the others.  
Why did Jesus call us to watch?

Following was obvious.  
We had followed since Galilee.  
For so many of us it started with a healing.  
When others saw us as broken or sick,  
Jesus saw us as those who were called.

Called to be the watchers.

Jesus saw our pain, our isolation, our torment.  
He saw our yearnings,  
And gave us healing.  
With Love, came new life.  
We were free.  
Free to leave. Free to follow.  
Free to watch with new eyes.

We served with one another.  
We served Jesus and all who followed.  
Sometimes we cooked.  
Other times we cleaned.  
We assumed that was our calling.

But as I have looked back, it is not the cooking or cleaning that I remember.

I remember the watching.

I remember watching Jesus find others like me to heal.

I remember watching him call others like me to follow.  
I remember watching our faces as he taught us.  
I remember watching the demons recognize him,  
And Peter confess him Lord.

The watching was not always easy.

With an eye towards Jerusalem, the watching became more difficult.

Watching Jesus weep over the city as tears stung our own eyes.  
Watching a jubilant King's welcome and a condemning crowd.  
Watching the disciples realize their weakness and capacity for betrayal.  
Watching all of us resist the suffering Jesus told us would be required.

I watched.  
I watched us all resist the path Jesus had called us to.  
This path of watching.  
I remember watching the kindness in his eyes as he lovingly told us what we would watch next, as he handed us bread and wine.

None of us wanted to be called to watch.

Especially when we realized the watching  
Would be the hardest thing we had ever done.

We were to watch him suffer, and not be able to save him.  
We were to watch him be killed, and not turn away.  
We were to watch his last breath on this earth,  
and only have the comfort of each other's tightly clasped hands.

Jesus had called us to watch.

Why?

Was it because Jesus knew we would not leave him?  
Was it because we would gather in our grief to go and anoint his dear body?  
Was it because Jesus knew that we would someday realize the importance of watching?

I don't know.

But I do know we were called.

Called to watch.  
Called to be his witnesses.

Amen

Comments? Contact Beth Knowlton at: [BKnowlton@stphilipscathedral.org](mailto:BKnowlton@stphilipscathedral.org)

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