

How to speak without sinning? How to write anything down which isn't the result of some kind of power-play or prejudice? Such thoughts come to mind with the injunction in today's gospel to 'Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation'. And a commentary on this ending to Mark's gospel makes it very clear that the text itself is not the Gospel's original ending but was officially recognised as canonical only in the sixteenth century at the Council of Trent and arguably added not to leave the women with the last word.

In the gospel's original ending, the women are the first to hear of the resurrection and are commanded to tell Peter and the disciples that he will meet them again in Galilee. They leave the tomb in fear and trembling but also in amazement and ekstasis which we may translate as 'astonishment' and see in a negative light but in Mark's gospel is indicative of a significant change in perspective or conversion. The women's eyes have been opened in a way the other disciples have yet to experience and understand. They too will be initially amazed, but their amazement quickly turns to joy and, while their experience is largely affirmed in a positive sense, the prior experience of the women is downplayed. So this text comes with yet another 'government health warning' – don't take it literally and try to pick up snakes, for example. Other things are going on here which need our attention and our prayer. This isn't about privileging women over men, or men over women, but privileging all in Christ and that, in turn, isn't about imposing Christ on others but it is about so living the Good News of Christ's life, death and resurrection that others will also be amazed and open to ekstasis. This is life with others without sin.

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