



**Praying with "Holy  
Women Near the Tomb"  
By Maurice Denis (1894)**

***Holy Women at the Tomb (Easter morning), 1894***

Poet of everyday life, the nabi Maurice Denis helps us to perceive the mystery of the Resurrection in our ordinary life.



We can distinguish three simultaneous scenes," deciphers Fleur Nabert, a sculptor.

In the background, Mary Magdalene is kneeling in front of the Risen One. This is the "Noli me tangere" of the Gospel.

Let's look at the scene of the holy women at the tomb. According to tradition, this is Mary Magdalene, Mary Cleophas and Mary Salome, who are called "myrrhophores" because they come to the tomb, carrying ointments to embalm the body of Christ. In front of them, on the left, they are probably angels, as suggested by the winged shape of their arms.

Finally, in the foreground, the little girl in the posture of first communicant is certainly the daughter of the painter, and the garden is also the one of his house in Saint-Germain-en-Laye. They both represent the dimension of everyday life. "Incandescent, Christ is therefore resurrected "at" Maurice Denis's home and sets the entire landscape ablaze, even bringing out the spring - the trees in bloom – where autumn or winter prevailed – the bare trees or sparse leaves.

"Here, it is truly Christ, the "light of the world", who is represented, illuminating the whole picture in an exceptional way. I like this fine golden streak that circles the heads of the characters. It's the tenuous but very persistent light of the divine in our very concrete life" says Fleur Nabert. The spectator is invited to become like the little girl and to rediscover this light through the grace of the communion. »

*Article from "Panorama" (April 2018).*

