



Chapter & verse – Susan Durber (page 26)

Read John 20:11-18, followed by Susan Durber’s article.

A larger version of *Noli Me Tangere* can be viewed online at bit.ly/noliwiki

1. ‘In Greek, the word for garden is also the word for paradise,’ says Susan. What do gardens mean to you?
2. ‘God made us to be gardeners,’ Susan argues: ‘those who enable the rest of creation to flourish.’ What would such a calling entail? In what ways do we fulfil the gardener role, and in what ways do we fail?
3. Susan’s fifth paragraph describes Titian’s depiction of Mary Magdalen’s encounter. How well does the painting fit your own vision of the biblical passage? Does it add something to it?
4. According to the National Gallery, x-rays have revealed that earlier versions of Titian’s painting showed Christ ‘wearing a gardener’s hat and turning away from Mary’. How well would that have matched John’s story?
5. Seeing Jesus as ‘the first of a new creation’ could challenge, inspire and ‘help us imagine and inhabit a new way of living,’ Susan argues, towards the end of the article. Can you think of practical ways in which we might care for our world better, emboldened by this vision?
6. ‘Mary was absolutely right. Jesus is the (new) gardener.’ What does it say about Jesus to call him the gardener? What sort of gardening does he do?

For further reflection: ‘The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.’ Genesis 2:15

Prayer: We thank you, father, for the garden that you have provided for us to live in. Make us worthy gardeners, we pray, and let your new creation come in us. Amen.

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