

Peace & Justice Report

For the week of July 28, 2017

THE FEAST OF MARY MAGDALENE—JULY 22 “THE APOSTLE OF THE NEW AND GREATEST HOPE”

What images do we have of Mary Magdalene? What images does society in general have? Who was she really? How does our image of Mary Magdalene form our opinion of women today?

PONDER AND PRAY



A Penitent Sinner who washed the feet of Jesus?

There is no Scriptural foundation that this Mary was Mary Magdalene. Mary was a very common name during this time

and there were many women named Mary who followed Jesus.



A woman compassionate and faithful, who went to the tomb very early the next morning after Jesus died to anoint his body and stayed to find him?

John 20:1-15 “Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary of

Magdala went to the tomb and saw the stone had been rolled away from the entrance...Meanwhile, Mary stood weeping beside the tomb...Sir, if you are the one who carried Jesus away, tell me where you have laid him and I will take it away.”



A Prostitute who repented?

There is no Scriptural proof for this. This concept was first introduced in 591 by Pope Gregory I, who said this was

his belief. This held in the Church tradition through modern times. As a result, Mary Magdalen’s leadership tradition faded, while her sexuality was demeaned.



An Apostle to the Apostles, sent by Jesus to give official witness to the Apostles of his Resurrection?

John 20:17 “Jesus then said to her, “Don’t hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. Rather, go to my brothers and tell them, “I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, my God and your God.”



A woman deeply in love with Jesus and who braved the danger to stay at the foot of the cross with Mary, his mother, and John, while the other apostles fled?

John 19: 25 “Standing close to Jesus’ cross were his mother; his mother’s sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas; and Mary of Magdala.”



An Apostle and Evangelist to the Gentiles?

An ancient tradition in the Eastern Church has Mary Magdalen facing the Roman Emperor Tiberius, challenging him to believe in the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, when the egg she was holding turned red. She continued proclaiming the Gospel to the entire imperial household.

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THE DECREE

“The Church, both in the East and in the West, has always regarded Saint Mary Magdalene the first witness of the Lord’s resurrection and the first evangelist, and with the greatest reverence has always honoured her, although in diverse ways.

Given that in our time the Church is called to reflect in a more profound way on the dignity of Woman, on the New Evangelisation and on the greatness of the Mystery of Divine Mercy, it seemed right that the example of Saint Mary Magdalene might also fittingly be proposed to the faithful.

In fact this woman, known as the one who loved Christ and who was greatly loved by Christ, and was called a “witness of Divine Mercy” by Saint Gregory the Great and an “apostle of the apostles” by Saint Thomas Aquinas, can now rightly be taken by the faithful as a model of women’s role in the Church.

While most liturgical celebrations of individual saints during the year are known formally as memorials, those classified as feasts are reserved for important events in Christian history and for saints of particular significance, such as the Twelve Apostles.

Therefore the Supreme Pontiff Pope Francis has established that from now on the celebration of Saint Mary Magdalene should be inscribed in the General Roman Calendar with the rank of Feast rather than Memorial as is presently the case.

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
3 June 2016, Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/sanctae-m-magdalенаe-decretum_en.pdf

Links:

Finding Peace with Mary Magdalene <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/449734/saint-mary-magdalene-prophetess-eucharistic-love-book-father-sean-davidson>

Mary Magdalene Is A Lot More Mysterious Than You Think <https://thefederalist.com/2017/07/22/mary-magdalene-lot-mysterious-think/>

Mary Magdalene, Feminist Icon? www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2017/07/mary-magdalene-feminist-icon

Statements by Archbishop Arthur Roche, secretary of the congregation:

In celebrating “an evangelist who proclaims the central joyous message of Easter,” St. Mary Magdalene’s feast day is a call for all Christians to “reflect more deeply on the dignity of women, the new evangelization and the greatness of the mystery of divine mercy.”

Drawing a comparison between Eve, who “spread death where there was life,” and St. Mary Magdalene, who “proclaimed life from the tomb, a place of death,” her feast day is a lesson for all Christians to trust in Christ who is alive and risen.

“It is right that the liturgical celebration of this woman has the same level of feast given to the celebration of the apostles in the general Roman calendar and highlights the special mission of this woman who is an example and model for every woman in the church.”

<http://www.catholicnews.com/services/englishnews/2016/pope-elevates-memorial-of-st-mary-magdalene-to-feast-day.cfm>

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/05/17/pope_francis_reflects_on_mary_magdalene_at_general_audience/1312802