

FEAST OF ST MARY MAGDALENE- THE TALE OF GRACE AND LOVE IN A SOUL, THURSDAY, 22ND JULY, 2021, WEEK 16, YEAR I.

SONG OF SONGS 3:1-4; PSALM 63; JOHN 20:1-2, 11-18.

Today, we celebrate the feast of St Mary Magdalene.

This day was initially celebrated as a memorial but the Holy Father, Pope Francis raised this celebration to the status of a feast.

Pope Francis has taken this decision to highlight the relevance of this woman who showed great love for Christ and was much loved by Christ.

When we look at the life of Mary Magdalene, who she was before Christ and who she became in Christ, two things come to our mind- the power of grace and the power of love.

Grace found her, a woman in whom seven demons resided became a woman in whom the Spirit of God resided with the seven divine gifts (Luke 8:2).

I appreciate more what God did for Mary Magdalene when I watched the movie "the chosen." Though the movie may not accurately represent reality because it appealed so much to creative imagination, it at least presents the gospel in a vivid and relatable context. In that movie, Mary Magdalene was an embarrassment in the Jewish society, the demons humiliated her and the Jewish exorcists were unable to successfully exorcise her. When she met Jesus, her life changed, her story changed, she became an enigma to many, her life became a witness to the power of Jesus.

Her troubled past didn't disqualify her from being the first witness and apostle of the resurrection. No matter what our past might have been, what we have endured, suffered, done, God still wants us and He is still able and willing to shine through us. He is a potter and He doesn't mind broken vessels.

I pray for someone reading/hearing this message that no matter how your past or present has been, your life will still be a living testimony of the power of Jesus.

Having been forgiven, Mary became an Apostle. St Thomas Aquinas was the first to call her Apostolorum Apostola (Apostle of the apostles). Her life revolved around Jesus. She loved Jesus with all her heart and she was loved by the Lord too.

The gospel of today reveals her great love, she was at the tomb very early on the first day of the week, while it was dark, she ran to call the apostles to tell them of the empty tomb, when everyone left, she remained weeping, she was ready to go alone and move Jesus back to the tomb if she was told where they moved his body, upon recognising Jesus, she clung to Him, can you picture her "holding unto Jesus and weeping profusely?"

This is a woman whose heart was aflame with divine love. Like the lover in today's first reading, she was a woman who sought and found love, she loved because she was loved first.

Today, I want us to just pray and ask the Lord to set our hearts ablaze with the fire of divine love, to plant deep in us, unquenchable love for Him, to enlarge our capacity to love Him, a love that will drive away fear, lukewarmness and attraction to sin.

When we become aware of God's love for us and we are set ablaze with the fire of His love, no affliction, opposition, suffering can shake the foundation of our relationship with Him or steal our joy in Him