

**Devotion to Jesus with Love –Feast of St. Mary Magdalene July 22nd, 2020
(Song 3:1-4b, John 20:1-2,11-18). By Fr. Emmanuel Subaar**

Pope Francis promoted the July 22nd memorial of St. Mary Magdalene to a feast in recognition of her role as the first to witness Christ's resurrection. There have been a lot of myths surrounding this biblical celebrity called Mary Magdalene. Some identify her as the repentant prostitute who poured expensive ointment on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. Others also identify her as the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Still others say she was the woman who was caught in adultery. But the Roman liturgy does not mention any of these as her identity but follows clear instances where the bible specifically mentions her name as "Mary who was named Magdalene," which means she came from Magdala.

Mary Magdalene was among the women who travelled with Jesus and supported him financially (Luke 8:2). This means she might have been blessed with income. She had stood with Jesus' mother at the foot of the cross and during his burial. Mark 16:9 says seven demons were driven out of Mary Magdalene. She responded by devoting the rest of her life to following Jesus and supporting his ministry. She has always been an example of devotion to Jesus in love. In our gospel reading today, she demonstrated her love by coming to the tomb of Jesus.

It was her love for Jesus that made her still wait around the tomb and was rewarded when the Lord appeared to her and called her by name. Jesus made Mary Magdalene "the apostle of the Apostles" in that she was the first to announce the resurrection to the Apostles. Our 1st reading from Song of Songs talks about love. It says "I have found him whom my heart loves...I held him and would not let him go..." Like Mary Magdalene we too seek the Lord whom we love. May we devote ourselves to the Lord with love as we discover Him.