

22 July 2025 - Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene

Ct 3,1-4a (or 2 Co 5, 14-17) : Jn 20, 1.11-18

Homily

Mary Magdalene is without doubt the woman mentioned in the Gospels about whom we know the most (although it is not always absolutely clear which "Mary" the Evangelists are talking about). When she washed Jesus' feet and sprinkled them with perfume, Jesus said that wherever the Gospel would be taught people would tell what she had done *"in memory of her"*. However, what St John has remembered most about Mary Magdalene, and which is the subject of the Gospel text we have just read, is that she was the first witness to the Resurrection of Jesus.

This was a very important thing in the early Church. You will remember that when the Eleven decided to choose someone to take Judas' place in the College of Twelve, they looked for someone who had been a *"witness to the Resurrection"*.

But what does it mean to be a "witness to the Resurrection"? In reality, no one witnessed the precise moment when Jesus rose alive from the tomb. This moment is the object of Faith. Witnesses to the Resurrection are those who had a personal encounter with the risen Christ. And among these witnesses, according to the Gospel, Mary Magdalene is the first. Saint John describes this encounter with great emotion and delicacy.

Mary Magdalene was the first to go to the tomb very early, on the first day of the week, when everything began. She expects to find the body of Jesus, but she sees that the stone that closed the tomb has been rolled away. She immediately goes to warn John, the beloved disciple, the only one of the Apostles who was present at Calvary, and she also goes to warn Peter, whose authority she thus recognizes. After the others had come and gone, she stood there weeping because her Lord had been taken away. She recognized him when he called her by her name *"Mary"*, as he had no doubt done many times before.

If we truly seek God - and this is what we have come to the monastery to do - one day or other we will hear Jesus call us by our own name. He will call us to an ever more intimate personal encounter with him. And then we too will be able to be - and indeed we too **must** be - witnesses to the Resurrection, for that is the essential mission

Document extrait du [site de l'abbaye Notre-Dame de Scourmont](#), qui se trouve sur le territoire de Forges, à sept kilomètres au sud de la ville de Chimay, en Belgique. Notre-Dame de Scourmont est une abbaye de l'Ordre Cistercien de la Stricte Observance.

of a Christian.

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