LITURGY BYTES

July Saints

This week, let us look at the life of Mary Magdalene, another July saint. Mary of Magdala, as she was known, is one of the greatest saints of the Bible and a legendary example of God's mercy and grace. The precise dates of her birth and death are unknown, but what we do know is she was present during Christ's public ministry, death, and resurrection. She is mentioned almost a dozen times in the Gospels. Mary Magdalene also had a reputation for being an immoral person. However, it is important to know that this idea is not supported in the Scriptures. The Gospels do agree that she was a sinful person. Jesus even cast seven demons out of her when he met her. However, after this she became a follower and brought several women associated with her to meet and follow Our Lord.

Another debate that has surfaced is - ***Could Mary Magdalene be the unnamed woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her hair as we read in John's Gospel?***

The scholars are skeptical about this, I might add. Despite the disputes about her background, she changed after meeting Jesus, and this gives us the example of how no one is beyond the saving grace of God. She was believed to be part of the entourage who travelled with Jesus and his disciples. It is most likely she watched the crucifixion from a distance, but she was present when he rose from the dead. She visited his tomb to anoint the body and found the stone rolled away with Jesus sitting in the place where his body had been laid. She is actually the first witness to His resurrection. After Christ ascended to heaven, she remained among the early Christians but was punished and exiled because of her faith. She landed somewhere in southern France and remained there until her death. Her feast day is July 22nd. She is the patroness of converts, repentant sinners, women, and contemplative life.

Have a blessed, safe, and healthy week ahead! ~Michele Hall