

Stations

of the

Magdalene

-A Meditation -



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Introduction

We who acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, turn to those who have gone before us to discover how that they have followed the Way, that we may safely follow in their footsteps.

As Jesus was on the cross, he was surrounded by two sinners, to the right and to the left. One merited entry to heaven by recognizing the Lord, one did not. At the foot of the cross stood two Marys, to also show us the way to follow the Lord; the way of Purity and the way of the Sinner.

This meditation is laid out in the form of three historical essays, from St. Gregory the Great, Ven. Louis of Granada, and St. Augustine. These are followed by the 12 scriptural appearances which mark the path from death to eternal life.

Although there is debate over Mary Magdalene and if she is or is not the repentant sinner which the church has held her to be, I ask you keep an open mind. St. Gregory the Great maps out a path through the scriptures which is our path; I pray you see that this is our journey, and that the debate over the person is an open question, which you are free to pick up and go with in either direction; the admonition I will add is that you are not free to say "St. Gregory the Great was wrong," for that is the nature of an open question; you may not exalt your less than studied opinion above that which he held, while remaining free to disagree.

It is my hope that this spiritual exercise will assist in your journey to Christ, to carry and welcome His cross in your life; the important thing to remember is that this is our path, the Way; other than that of the Virgin Mary, there really is no other.

May we meet on the day of the Lord, that our joy may be complete.

Appendix II

On the feast of Mary Magdalene, July 22, 2006, the members of the Blessed Margaret of Castello chapter of the Dominican Third Order met at the Chapter House in Homedale, Idaho, for a day long retreat on Mary Magdalene. The retreat was a very fruitful event, and we hope that by sharing it, others may derive fruit from it as well. This site provides the materials used for the retreat. Each segment was a reading of the materials, followed by open discussion, and closing, on each meditation, with prayer for grace to assist those who at that particular point in their journey.

May God the Father Almighty bless you,
may Jesus grant you light for the journey, and
may the Holy Spirit inflame your heart with divine love.
Mark Gross OPL, Prior

Retreat Schedule

- 9:00 Opening prayer and remarks.
- 9:15 Who is Mary Magdalene? Latin Tradition (St. Gregory the Great)/Eastern Tradition/Protestant Tradition.
- 9:45 The worldly woman (magdala, curled hair=adulterer).
- 10:00 The caught woman (go and sin no more).
- 10:15 The healed woman (touching the hem of His garment).
- 10:30 The grateful woman (washing His feet with her hair).
- 10:45 The learning woman (sitting at the feet of the Lord).
- 11:00 The nurturing woman (caring for our Lord on the road).
- 11:15 The interceding woman (Lazarus is raised from the dead).
- 11:30 Mass (or Rosary).
- 12:00 Martha's hour (lunch).
- 1:15 Anointing to the chagrin of Judas (spikenard).
- 1:30 At the foot of the cross (be not afraid).
- 1:45 Keeping watch (the vigilant heart).
- 2:00 The empty tomb (where have they taken Him?).
- 2:15 Witnessing to the Apostles (He is not in the tomb).
- 2:30 Wrap up, discussion.
- 3:00 Divine Mercy

Pope Saint Gregory the Great on Mary Magdalene

Maria Magdalene, quae fuerat in civitate peccatrix, amando veritatem, lavit lacrimis maculas criminis. (Mary Magdalene, who was a sinner in the city, by loving truth, washed away the stains of sin with her tears.)

--Pope St Gregory the Great, Homily 25 in Evangelia.

She whom Luke calls the sinful woman, whom John calls Mary, we believe to be the Mary from whom seven devils were ejected according to Mark. And what did these seven devils signify, if not all the vices? ... It is clear, brothers, that the woman previously used the unguent to perfume her flesh in forbidden acts. What she therefore displayed more scandalously, she was now offering to God in a more praiseworthy manner. She had coveted with earthly eyes, but now through penitence these are consumed with tears. She displayed her hair to set off her face, but now her hair dries her tears. She had spoken proud things with her mouth, but in kissing the Lord's feet, she now planted her mouth on the Redeemer's feet. For every delight, therefore, she had had in herself, she now immolated herself. She turned the mass of her crimes to virtues, in order to serve God entirely in penance, for as much as she had wrongly held God in contempt.

---Pope St. Gregory the Great, Hom. 33 (591AD)

Venerable Louis of Granada

Although there are many paths to heaven, all of them can be reduced to two: that of innocence and that of repentance. The first is the way of those who have never sinned; the other is the way of those who, having sinned, have done penance for their sins. The former was the path followed by the Blessed Virgin, St. John the Baptist, and those who never committed a mortal sin; the latter is the path of all other human beings.



Apart from these two paths there is no other because all those who are eventually saved are either innocent or repentant sinners. And since each of these paths requires a guide, divine wisdom has provided two guides that are outstanding. They are the two Marys: Mary, the Mother of the Savior, who was the mirror of innocence; and Mary Magdalene, who was the mirror of repentance.

Accordingly, all who travel by the path of innocence should keep their eyes fixed on the first Mary so that they may travel well. But those who travel by the way of repentance should fix their gaze on the second Mary and try to imitate her ardent spirit, her profound sorrow for sin, her vital faith, burning love, and disdain of the world. In this way they can judge whether their repentance is as it ought to be, for if they do not possess any of these characteristics, their repentance is not true repentance. Such would seem to be the case with those who have barely confessed their sins when they return to their former evil ways.

St. Luke says that a Pharisee once asked Christ to be his guest. Christ accepted the invitation and sat at table with him. In the same city there was a sinful woman whom many identify is the sister of Lazarus and Martha. She was called a sinful woman because she was a woman of evil life and was known as such throughout the country.

O wisdom of God! One of the vilest things in the world is an evil woman, of whom Ecclesiasticus says that she "shall be trodden upon as dung in the way" [Ecclus. 9:10]. This being so, God cast His glance on this woman who was not worthy of His gaze, to make her an example of repentance and one of the greatest glories of the Church. What was the reason? None other than that given by the prophet: "He saved me because He was well pleased with me" [Ps 17:20]. In other words, He did it for the glory of His grace, as an example of His mercy, and as a manifestation of His goodness. Thus we would know that all our good proceeds from Him and all our blessings come from His hands. We should, therefore, attribute them to Him and seek them from Him. This realization will make us more humble, more dependent, more grateful, and more fearful; more humble because of our poverty, more dependent because of our many dangers, more grateful for his grace, and more fearful because of our weakness.

Appendix I

The Twelve Occurrences in Sacred Scripture of Mary Magdalene by Name

Lk 8:2. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalen, out of whom seven devils were gone forth,

Jn 19:25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen.

Mk 15:40. And there were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joseph and Salome,

Mt 27:56. Among whom was Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Mk 15:47. And Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of Joseph, beheld where he was laid.

Mt 27:61. And there was there Mary Magdalen and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

Jn 20:1. And on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalen cometh early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre: and she saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Mk 16:1. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus.

Mt 28:1. And in the end of the sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

Mk 16:9. But he rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen; out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Jn 20:18. Mary Magdalen cometh and telleth the disciples: I have seen the Lord; and these things he said to me.

Lk 24:10. And it was Mary Magdalen and Joanna and Mary of James and the other women that were with them, who told these things to the apostles.

Station XII - Witnessing to the Apostles

He is not in the tomb



Jn 20:18 Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and what he told her.

Lk 24:9-11 Then they returned from the tomb and announced all these things to the eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; the others who accompanied them also told this to the apostles, but their story seemed like nonsense and they did not believe them.

Summary

I hope you have benefited from this meditation. Thank you, and may we together journey away from this world towards the world to come.

Remember, you have died with Christ; treat this world as you know you will treat it once you have died; only charity endures.

God bless you



Magdalen had been moved by the teaching of Christ, illumined by his grace, and drawn to repentance. When she learned that Jesus was visiting the home of the Pharisee, the impetus of her sorrow and love impelled her to hasten to Him. She took a vase of precious ointment which she had purchased not to atone for sin but to multiply her own sins, not to anoint Christ but to offer sacrifice to the devil. With this instrument of sin she would make war against sin.

Magdalen entered the house where the Savior was dining but her shame at her sins did not give her the courage to stand before Christ. Rather, she walked behind the couch on which Jesus was reclining and kneeling, began to bathe His feet, shedding copious tears as she did so. Indeed, it seemed that her very tears washed His feet, and then she dried them with her long and beautiful hair. Not content with this, she began to kiss His feet and to anoint them with the precious ointment which she had brought for the purpose.

All the things she and formerly used in her slavery to the world, she now consecrated to the service of Christ; all the instruments of sin became remedies for sin. From her eyes poured forth a fountain of tears to wash the stains from her soul; her hair became a towel to wipe away her sins; the precious ointment became a balsam to cure the wounds of her soul and to counteract the odor of her sinful life.

Meanwhile, what she performed exteriorly was effected interiorly in her soul by the Savior. She anointed His feet with ointment and He anointed her soul with grace; she washed His feet with her tears and He washed the sins from her soul by His blood; she dried His feet with her hair and He adorned her soul with virtues; she kissed His feet lovingly and He bestowed on her the kiss of peace, as was given to the prodigal son on his return.

In all this it is not reported that any words were spoken between Christ and Mary Magdalen. Tears sufficed for speech and sighs and desires took the place of words. So David says: "Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hidden from thee" [Ps 37:10].

O humble tears, says St. Jerome, yours is the power, yours is the kingdom. You are not fearful before the tribunal of the Judge; you silence all accusers. You conquer the invincible and tie the hands of the om-



nipotent. St. Bernard calls these tears the wine of angels because in them is the odor of life, the taste of grace, and the delight of pardon. I prefer to call them a divine perfume, for perfume is distilled not from one single herb or flower but from many. Such were the tears of Magdalen, which did not proceed from one cause or emotion, but from many for they were tears of faith, hope, love, sorrow, and devotion.

The cause of Magdalen's conversion and repentance was that ray of light with which the Savior illumined the darkness of her soul. This light opened her eyes

so that she could see the horrible spectacle of infernal monsters that surrounded her and she was so horrified by her dangerous position that she ran in search of a remedy. So it was that she set out in the middle of the day, without waiting for advice or the proper time, and thrust herself into the midst of the banquet in order to find Christ.

What are you doing, woman? Do you not realize that this is not the time or place for that which you intend to do? A person does not want witnesses or public places for these things, but darkness and solitude. This is what Nicodemus did when he came in the darkness of night to seek out Christ [Cf. Jn 3:2]. Nothing is lost if one waits another hour for this business.

But Magdalen heeds none of these arguments; the vehemence of her sorrow and the shame and horror at her condition so filled her mind that she could think of nothing but the danger of her state. And all this was effected by the light which God infused into her soul; it aroused in her great fear and a love so great that the Lord said to her: "Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much." Not only did love work in her, but also sorrow, and such great sorrow that it caused her to shed an abundance of tears. And not only sorrow, but shame and confusion, and disdain of the world, for she took such little account of the remarks of the other guests and the judgement of the Pharisee that she was able to do that which effected her salvation.

Not only was she repentant and thereby saved, but she experienced a deep desire to make satisfaction to God for the offenses she had committed. Consequently, after the Lord had ascended into heaven, although she had already obtained from His lips a complete remission of her sins, she spent thirty years in a cave doing penance. Each day she was marvelously caught up in rapture amidst angelic choirs. God thereby manifested the power and efficacy of true

Station XI - The Empty Tomb

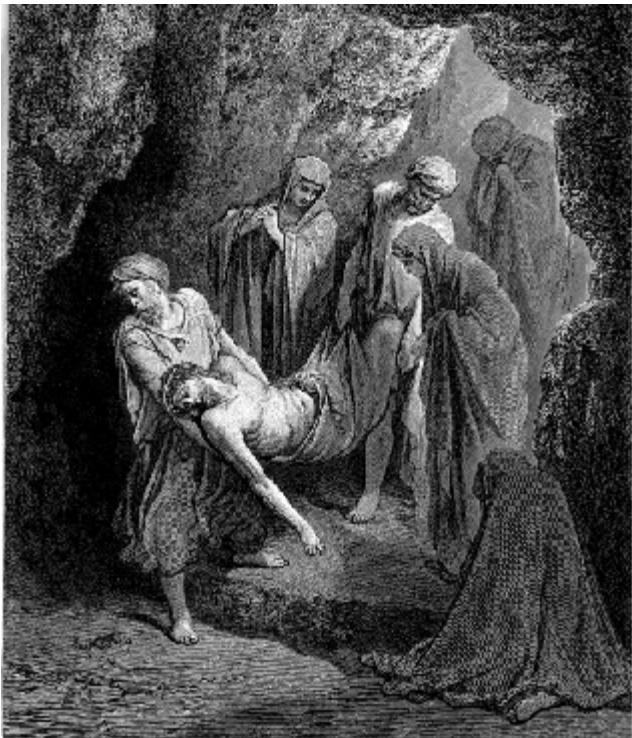
where have they taken Him?



Jn 20:1-17 On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned home. But Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Station X - Keeping Watch

The vigilant heart



Mk 15:47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph watched where he was laid.

Mt 27:59-61 Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it (in) clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb.

repentance which makes the penitents equal to the angels.

As a greater confirmation of what we have said, we read in the Gospel that Magdalen stood at the side of the Blessed Mother at the foot of the cross. Mary the penitent stands with Mary the innocent. By this we are made to understand that sometimes the true penitents are made like the innocent and even surpass them, as it is said: "Sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be made clean; wash me and I shall become whiter than snow." To say that one will be made whiter than snow is to say that the penitent sometimes becomes whiter than the innocent, and it is to be believed that Magdalen in heaven is much more glorious than many who never committed a mortal sin. Let us imitate her example of penance so that we may become sharers in her glory.

Ven Louis of Granada, Summa of the Christian Life, Volume 3, Chapter 19, Mary Magdalene

St. Augustine

Tractates (Lectures) on the Gospel of John

Tractate 121 (John 20:10-29)

1. Mary Magdalene had brought the news to His disciples, Peter and John, that the Lord was taken away from the sepulchre; and they, when they came thither, found only the linen clothes wherewith the body had been shrouded; and what else could they believe but what she had told them, and what she had herself also believed? "Then the disciples went away again unto their own" (home); that is to say, where they were dwelling, and from which they had run to the sepulchre. "But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping." For while the men returned, the weaker sex was fastened to the place by a stronger affection. And the eyes, which had sought the Lord and had not found Him, had now nothing else to do but weep, deeper in their sorrow that He had been taken away from the sepulchre than that He had been slammed on the tree; seeing that in the case even of such a Master, when His living presence was withdrawn from their eyes, His remembrance also had ceased to remain. Such grief, therefore, now kept the woman at the sepulchre. "And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." Why she did so I know not. For she was not ignorant that He whom she sought was no longer there, since she had herself also carried word to the disciples that He had been taken from thence; while they, too, had come to the sepulchre, and had sought the Lord's body, not merely by looking, but also by entering, and had not found it. What then does it mean, that, as she wept, she stooped down, and looked again into the sepulchre?

Was it that her grief was so excessive that she hardly thought she could believe either their eyes or her own? Or was it rather by some divine impulse that her mind led her to look within? For look she did, "and saw two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain." Why is it that one was sitting at the head, and the other at the feet? Was it, since those who in Greek are called angels are in Latin nuntii [in English, news-bearers], that in this way they signified that the gospel of Christ was to be preached from head to foot, from the beginning even to the end? "They say to her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." The angels forbade her tears: for by such a position what else did they announce, but that which in some way or other was a future joy? For they put the question, "Why weepest thou?" as if they had said, Weep not. But she, supposing they had put the question from ignorance, unfolded the cause of her tears. "Because," she said, "they have taken away my Lord:" calling her Lord's inanimate body her Lord, meaning a part for the whole; just as all of us acknowledge that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord, who of course is at once both the Word and soul and flesh, was nevertheless crucified and buried, while it was only His flesh that was laid in the sepulchre. "And I know not," she added, "where they have laid Him." This was the greater cause of sorrow, because she knew not where to go to mitigate her grief. But the hour had now come when the joy, in some measure announced by the angels, who forbade her tears, was to succeed the weeping.

2. Lastly, "when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, If thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master." Let no one speak ill of the woman because she called the gardener, Sir (domine), and Jesus, Master. For there she was asking, here she was recognizing; there she was showing respect to a person of whom she was asking a favor, here she was recalling the Teacher of whom she was learning to discern things human and divine. She called one lord (sir), whose handmaid she was not, in order by him to get at the Lord to whom she belonged. In one sense, therefore, she used the word Lord when she said, "They have taken away my Lord; and in another, when she said, Sir (lord), if thou hast borne Him hence." For the prophet also called those lords who were mere men, but in a different sense from Him of whom it is written, "The Lord is His name." But how was it that this woman, who had al-

Station IX - At the Foot of the Cross

Be not afraid!



John 19:25 Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

Mk 15:40 There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. These women had followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him.

Mt 27:54-56 The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said, "Truly, this was the Son of God!" There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Station VIII - Anointing to the chagrin of Judas

Spikenard



Jn 12:1-8 Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Then Judas the Iscariot, one (of) his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?" He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions. So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

Mk 14:3-9 When he was in Bethany reclining at table in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil, costly genuine spikenard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head. There were some who were indignant. "Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil? It could have been sold for more than three hundred days' wages and the money given to the poor." They were infuriated with her. Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you make trouble for her? She has done a good thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anticipated anointing my body for burial. Amen, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

ready turned herself back to see Jesus, when she supposed Him to be the gardener, and was actually talking with Him, is said to have again turned herself, in order to say unto Him "Rabboni," but just because, when she then turned herself in body, she supposed Him to be what He was not, while now, when turned in heart, she recognized Him to be what He was.

3. "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." There are points in these words which we must examine with brevity indeed, but with somewhat more than ordinary attention. For Jesus was giving a lesson in faith to the woman, who had recognized Him as her Master, and called Him so in her reply; and this gardener was sowing in her heart, as in His own garden, the grain of mustard seed. What then is meant by "Touch me not"? And just as if the reason of such a prohibition would be sought, He added, "for I am not yet ascended to my Father." What does this mean? If, while standing on earth, He is not to be touched, how could He be touched by men when sitting in heaven? For certainly, before He ascended, He presented Himself to the touch of the disciples, when He said, as testified by the evangelist Luke, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;" or when He said to Thomas the disciple, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and put forth thy hand, and thrust it into my side." And who could be so absurd as to affirm that He was willing indeed to be touched by the disciples before He ascended to the Father, but refused it in the case of women till after His ascension? But no one, even had any the will, was to be allowed to run into such folly. For we read that women also, after His resurrection and before His ascension to the Father, touched Jesus, among whom was Mary Magdalene herself; for it is related by Matthew that Jesus met them, and said, "All hail. And they approached, and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him." This was passed over by John, but declared as the truth by Matthew. It remains, therefore, that some sacred mystery must lie concealed in these words; and whether we discover it or utterly fail to do so, yet we ought to be in no doubt as to its actual existence. Accordingly, either the words, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father," had this meaning, that by this woman the Church of the Gentiles was symbolized, which did not believe on Christ till He had actually ascended to the Father, or that in this way Christ wished Himself to be believed on; in other words, to be touched spiritually, that He and the Father are one. For He has in a manner ascended to the Father, to the inward perception of him who has made such progress in the knowledge of Christ that he acknowledges Him as equal with the Father: in any other way He is not rightly touched, that is to say, in any

other way He is not rightly believed on. But Mary might have still so believed as to account Him unequal with the Father, and this certainly is forbidden her by the words, "Touch me not;" that is, Believe not thus on me according to thy present notions; let not your thoughts stretch outwards to what I have been made in thy behalf, without passing beyond to that whereby thou hast thyself been made. For how could it be otherwise than carnally that she still believed on Him whom she was weeping over as a man? "For I am not yet ascended," He says, "to my Father:" there shalt thou touch me, when thou believest me to be God, in no wise unequal with the Father. "But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father." He saith not, Our Father: in one sense, therefore, is He mine, in another sense, yours; by nature mine, by grace yours. "And my God, and your God." Nor did He say here, Our God: here, therefore, also is He in one sense mine, in another sense yours: my God; under whom I also am as man; your God, between whom and you I am mediator.

4. "Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and He hath spoken these things unto me. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side." For nails had pierced His hands, a spear had laid open His side: and there the marks of the wounds are preserved for healing the hearts of the doubting. But the shutting of doors presented no obstacle to the matter of His body, wherein Godhead resided. He indeed could enter without their being opened, by whose birth the virginity of His mother remained inviolate, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said He unto them again, Peace be unto you." Reiteration is confirmation; for He Himself gives by the prophet a promised peace upon peace. "As the Father hath sent me," He saith, "even so send I you." We know the Son to be equal to the Father; but here we recognize the words of the Mediator. For He exhibits Himself as occupying a middle position when He says, He me, and I you. "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." By breathing on them He signified that the Holy Spirit was the Spirit, not of the Father alone, but likewise His own. "Whose so-ever sins," He continues, "ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained." The Church's love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, discharges the sins of all who are partakers with itself, but retains the sins of those who have no participation therein. Therefore it is, that after saying "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He straightway added this regarding the remission and retention of sins.

mas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him." When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. (But) even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed 7 and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?" So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go." Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

Station VII - The Interceding Woman

Lazarus is raised from the dead



John 11:1-45 Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him, saying, "Master, the one you love is ill." When Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Tho-

5. "But Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God." He saw and touched the man, and acknowledged the God whom he neither saw nor touched; but by the means of what he saw and touched, he now put far away from him every doubt, and believed the other. "Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed." He saith not, Thou hast touched me, but, "Thou hast seen me," because sight is a kind of general sense. For sight is also habitually named in connection with the other four senses: as when we say, Listen, and see how well it sounds; smell it, and see how well it smells; taste it, and see how well it savors; touch it, and see how hot it is. Everywhere has the word, See, made itself heard, although sight, properly speaking, is allowed to belong only to the eyes. Hence here also the Lord Himself says, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands:" and what else does He mean but, Touch and see? And yet he had no eyes in his finger. Whether therefore it was by looking, or also by touching, "Because thou hast seen me," He says, "thou hast believed." Although it may be affirmed that the disciple dared not so to touch, when He offered Himself for the purpose; for it is not written, And Thomas touched Him. But whether it was by gazing only, or also by touching that he saw and believed, what follows rather proclaims and commends the faith of the Gentiles: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." He made use of words in the past tense, as One who, in His predestinating purpose, knew what was future, as if it had already taken place. But the present discourse must be kept from the charge of prolixity: the Lord will give us the opportunity to discourse at another time on the topics that remain.

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Station I - The Worldly Woman

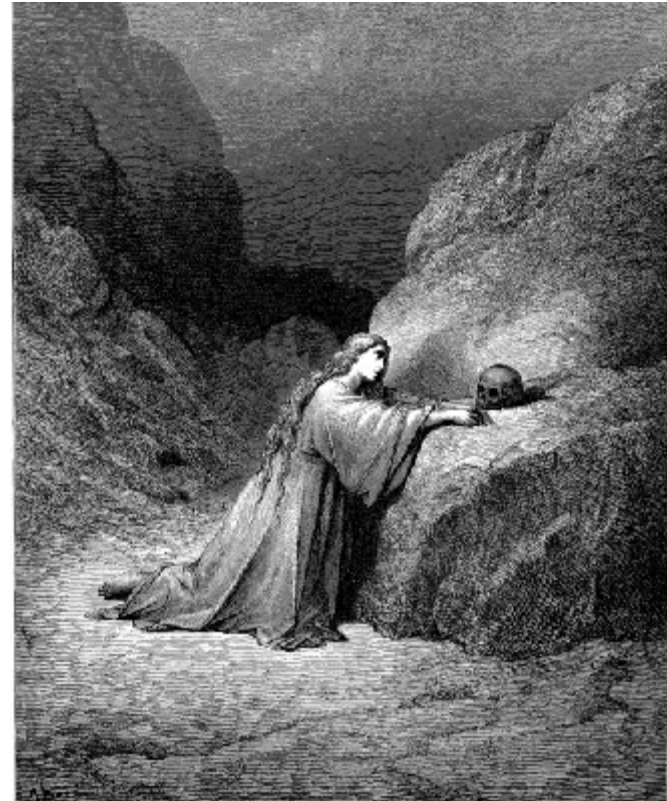
magdala, curled hair=adulterer



Ecclesiasticus 9:3-13. Look not upon a woman that hath a mind for many: lest thou fall into her snares. Use not much the company of her that is a dancer, and hearken not to her, lest thou perish by the force of her charms. Gaze not upon a maiden, lest her beauty be a stumbling block to thee. Give not thy soul to harlots in any point: lest thou destroy thyself and thy inheritance. Look not round about thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about upon another's beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire. Every woman that is a harlot, shall be trodden upon as dung in the way. Many by admiring the beauty of another man's wife, have become reprobate, for her conversation burneth as fire. Sit not at all with another man's wife, nor repose upon the bed with her: And strive not with her over wine, lest thy heart decline towards her and by thy blood thou fall into destruction.

Station VI - The Nurturing Woman

Caring for our Lord on the road



Lk 8:1-2. Afterward he journeyed from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, [...]

Station V - The Learning Woman

Sitting at the feet of the Lord



Luke 10:38-42. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain town: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who, sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word. But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her therefore, that she help me. And the Lord answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things: But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Station II - The Caught Woman

Go, and sin no more



Jn 8:1-11 While Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, (and) from now on do not sin any more."

Station III - The Healed Woman

Touching the hem of His garment



Mt 20-22 A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. She said to herself, "If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured." Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you." And from that hour the woman was cured.

Lk 43-48 And a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years, who (had spent her whole livelihood on doctors

and) was unable to be cured by anyone, came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped. Jesus then asked, "Who touched me?" While all were denying it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are pushing and pressing in upon you." But Jesus said, "Someone has touched me; for I know that power has gone out from me." When the woman realized that she had not escaped notice, she came forward trembling. Falling down before him, she explained in the presence of all the people why she had touched him and how she had been healed immediately. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Mk 24-34 He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him. There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?" But his disciples said to him, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

Station IV - The Grateful Woman

Washing His feet with her hair



Luke 7:36-50 A Pharisee invited him to dine with him, and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." Jesus said to him in reply, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. "Two people were in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both. Which of them will love him more?" Simon said in reply, "The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven." He said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet, but she has bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with ointment. So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." The others at table said to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" But he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."