

Friday of the Twenty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 8:1-3): Jesus 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, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources.

The women

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(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, Jesus walks with the twelve and some women, spreading the Word. There is a considerable difference between the way the disciples follow Jesus and the way the women do. The Gospels leave us with no doubt that "many" women formed part of the constituency of believers and that they "accompanied Jesus in the faith" which was essential to being part of this community. This is clearly demonstrated later on at the foot of the Cross and at the resurrection.

In opposition to the customs of the times when women were considered secondary citizens, Christ started a sort of female emancipation. Femininity completes humanity as much as masculinity does but in very different ways; Women have a special sensitivity to be able to capture what is new, different and great, what is mysterious that appears in Jesus Christ. He brings them into His company in a special way and from this comes forth the "Womanly Charisma".

—Mary, you are blessed among all women and mother of the church.