

SAINT MARY MAGDALENE

The Gospels tell us that Mary Magdalene was one from whom “*seven demons had gone out*” (Luke 8:2). Was she really a victim of demonic possession? Or was she mentally ill? Or was Mary, as the Western tradition has it, a woman in the grip of prostitution? Whatever Mary’s problem was, it was, to be sure, something dark. And yet she had come to Jesus in her brokenness. Overwhelmed with the desire for something to change, she asked him to heal her. And he did.

From that time, Mary followed him anywhere and everywhere. She stood with the other women at the foot of the cross. And on the morning after the Sabbath, she stood outside the tomb, weeping (John 20:11-16). There she met the gardener. “*Woman, why are you weeping?*” Sick with grief, Mary said, “*Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.*” At this, the “gardener” addressed her, “*Mary!*”

All at once she knew that it was Jesus. The one who healed her had conquered death itself! And he called her by name! She was overwhelmed with his love. Meditating upon Mary Magdalene, Pope Benedict XVI taught: “If we seek the Lord with a simple and sincere mind, we too will find him; indeed, he himself will come to meet us; he will make us recognize him, he will call us by name...he will admit us to the intimacy of his love.”