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22 Wednesday

WEDNESDAY Week 16 of Year

St Mary Magdalen

Song of Songs 3: 1-4 or 2Cor 15: 14 - 17

Ps 62: 2-6, 8-9

John 20: 1-2, 11-18

Today's feastday of St Mary Magdalen has its own special gospel reading. It recounts her going to Jesus' tomb early on Easter Sunday morning, then going to tell His disciples that the tomb was empty, then going back there and remaining until (in the beautiful words of the Song of Songs) she finally "found him whom my heart loves". Magdalen's love and perseverance made her the first of Jesus' friends to see Him risen, and the first to receive a commission from the risen Lord. For He made her an "apostle to His apostles", bringing them the definite news of Jesus' resurrection and His first instructions for them.

Mary Magdalen became a subject of popular devotion in the western church from the middle ages onwards. Her character and personality have been given some different interpretations throughout Christian history, and biblical scholars have disputed about who exactly she was. A popular musical show and movie "Jesus Christ Superstar" some 30 years ago, had Mary Magdalen singing a lovely solo song: "I don't know how to love Him". It emphasised her great love for Jesus. Maybe that's an image of Magdalen that appeals more easily to people of today.

May her passionate love and attachment to Jesus be an inspiration for us who desire to love Him with our whole hearts as, literally, the love of our lives. May we ask to share her privilege of hearing the Lord calling us by our own names and being able to recognise Him in other people. And may we, like Mary, become messengers of joyful good news to our brothers and sisters in Christ.