22 July: St Mary Magdalene (no text)

**APOSTLE OF THE APOSTLES**

Pope Francis has raised the celebration of the memorial of St. Mary Magdalene to the dignity of a liturgical Feast, recognizing the importance of her role as the “apostle of the apostles.”

The liturgical celebration has the same grade of feast given to the celebration of the apostles, and shines a light on the special mission of this woman, who is an example and model for every woman in the Church.

The decision means that we should reflect more deeply on the dignity of women, the New Evangelization, and the greatness of the mystery of Divine Mercy.

Mary Magdalene is an example of true and authentic evangelization. She was the first witness to the Resurrection, and is the one who announced the joyful central message of Easter to the Apostles.

Pope Francis took this decision in the context of the Jubilee of Mercy to signify the importance of one who showed a great love for Christ and was much loved by Christ.

Saint Mary Magdalene was referred to as the “Apostle of the Apostles” (Apostolorum Apostola) by St Thomas Aquinas, since she announced to them the Resurrection, and they, in turn, announced it to the whole world.

The Church, both in the East and in the West has always regarded Saint Mary Magdalene as the first witness of the Lord’s resurrection and the first evangelist, and with the greatest reverence has always honoured her.

Given that in our time the Church is called to reflect in a more profound way on the dignity of Woman, on the New Evangelisation and on the greatness of the Mystery of Divine Mercy, the example of Saint Mary Magdalene is fittingly proposed to the faithful. In fact this woman, known as the one who loved Christ and who was greatly loved by Christ, and was called a “witness of Divine Mercy” by Saint Gregory the Great, can now rightly be taken by the faithful as a model of women’s role in the Church.

(See below)

Unofficial translation of the Preface of the Apostle of the Apostles:

It is truly right and just,

our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks,

Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,

whose mercy is no less than your power,

to preach the Gospel to everyone, through Christ, our Lord.

In the garden He appeared to Mary Magdalene,

who loved him in life, who witnessed his death on the cross,

who sought him as he lay in the tomb,

who was the first to adore him when he rose from the dead,

and whose apostolic duty was honoured by the apostles

that the good news of life might reach the ends of the earth.

And so Lord, with all the Angels and Saints,

we, too, give you thanks, as in exultation we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might …

The new rank of celebration does not involve any change of the day on which the celebration itself takes place and, as for the liturgical texts, the following is to be observed:

1. a) The day dedicated to the celebration of Saint Mary Magdalene remains the same as it appears in the Roman Calendar, that is 22 July.

2. b) The texts to be used in the Mass and in the Divine Office remain the same as those contained in the Missal and in the Liturgy of the Hours on the day of the Feast, with the addition in the Missal of a proper Preface, attached to this Decree. It will be the responsibility of the Conferences of Bishops to translate the text of the Preface into the vernacular language so that, having received the approval of the Apostolic See, it can be used and in due time included in the next reprint of the Roman Missal.