



Sent

Mary Magdalene: A model of being called and being sent

Facilitator's Guide

Purpose: Throughout scripture we see how women are being called by God, called by Christ, converted and changed, and then sent out as leading members of the Church, serving those who serve, leading the world into a relationship with Christ. Mary Magdalene is a significant example of this – called by Christ out of sin, changed from the inside out, emptied of her old life, and then sent, as Apostle to the Apostles. This is our visual for the role women play in ministry. In this study we will discover how we are called, changed and sent to serve the Church, serve our brothers and sisters in Christ, and grow closer to sainthood through our feminine genius.

Together, ask for the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel, patroness of MCCW.

Let us pray. Lord of heavenly wisdom, Who has given us your own Mother Mary to be our guide and Counselor in this our lives, Grant that in all things we may have the grace to seek maternal instruction and to profit by it in humility and love. O Mother of Good Counsel, Patroness of the Military Council of Catholic Women, help us to understand and fulfill the mind and will of your Divine Son, Jesus Christ. Under the blessing of the Father, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, may we be responsible and intelligent daughters of the Church. May we labor in the spirit of renewal to realize more perfectly the Kingdom of God here below, as the only true preparation for our share in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Called

1. Hearing the call

- a. Mary Magdalene hears the call
- b. Read out loud Luke 7:37-38:
 - i. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.
- c. Discussion questions

2. Responding to the call

- a. Mulieris Dignitatum: women have a dignity and vocation inherent in their creation



- b. Letter to Women: What is our womanly insight and design? How is our focus on relationships a gift to the world?
- c. Read out loud Luke 8:1-3:
 - i. After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.
- d. Discussion Questions

Changed

1. Being emptied

- a. Read out loud St John of the Cross "The Living Flame of Love", Stanza 3, 18:
 - i. These caverns are the soul's faculties: memory, intellect, and will. They are as deep as the boundless goods of which they are capable since anything less than the infinite fails to fill them. From what they suffer when they are empty, we can gain some knowledge of their enjoyment and delight when they are filled with God, since one contrary sheds light on the other. In the first place, it is noteworthy that when these caverns of the faculties are not emptied, purged, and cleansed of every affection for creatures, they do not feel the vast emptiness of their deep capacity. Any little thing that adheres to them in this life is sufficient to so burden and bewitch them that they do not perceive the harm or note the lack of their immense goods, or know their own capacity. It is an amazing thing that the least of these goods is enough so to encumber these faculties, capable of infinite goods, that they cannot receive these infinite goods until they are completely empty, as we shall see. Yet when these caverns are empty and pure, the thirst, hunger, and yearning of the spiritual feeling is intolerable. Since these caverns have deep stomachs, they suffer profoundly; for the food they lack, which as I say is God, is also profound.
- b. Mary Magdalene was emptied of everything, juxtaposed with the wealthy man.
Read out loud Matthew 19:160-30



- i. Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.” “Which ones?” he inquired. Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,’[a] and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’” “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?” Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife[c] or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

c. Discussion Questions:

2. Letting go

- a. Mary Magdalene and the end of relationship. Read out loud John 19:25 and John 20:15-17
 - i. Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
 - ii. He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”). Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”



- b. Held at a distance - St. Teresa and the Dark Night of the Soul
- c. Discussion Questions:

3. Being filled

- a. Mary Magdalene sent on mission and immediately goes
- b. Read out loud John 20:18
 - i. I have seen the Lord!
- c. Discussion Questions:

Sent

1. Ready for mission

- a. Being Apostle to the Apostles
- b. Read out loud Acts 2:1-4
 - i. When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them.
- c. Discussion Questions:

2. Trusting

- a. Read out loud the story of Mary Magdalene - This is a famous pilgrimage site!
 - i. There is a widely recognized, time-honored alliance between Mary Magdalene and Provence—South of France. Two significant sites of pilgrimage bear witness to this claim: the [Basilica of Saint Mary Magdalene in St.-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume](#) and [La Sainte-Baume](#), a mountain cave on the plain of the Plan d'Aups, overlooking the Massif de la Sainte-Baume. Tradition has it that, after the execution of St. James in Jerusalem (son of Zebedee and Mary Salome), Mary Magdalene, her sister Martha and brother Lazarus were persecuted by the Jews of Jerusalem and imprisoned. The Jews were afraid of the crowd if they were to execute the prisoners so they towed them off the shores of Palestine in a boat without sails or oars or supplies and abandoned them to the open sea. Others in the boat included Mary Jacobe, mother of James and the sister of the Virgin Mary, Mary Salome, mother of the apostles James and John, Maximin, one of the seventy two disciples of Christ, Cedonius, the blind man who was miraculously healed by Jesus, Marcelle, Martha's servant, and Sara, maid of the two Marys. After narrowly escaping death during a storm at



sea the boat finally came to shore on the coast of Gaul in a town now called [Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer](#) in Camargue. Mary Jacobe, Mary Salome and Sara remained in Camargue. Martha traveled towards Avignon and ended up in [Tarascon](#). Mary Magdalene, Lazarus, Maximin and Cedonius traveled on to [Marseille](#) where Mary Magdalene began to preach. They ended up converting the whole of Provence. Lazarus became the first bishop of Marseille. Mary Magdalene then went on to [Aix](#) where Maximin had already gone, some twenty miles north of Marseille. Maximin became the first bishop of Aix and Mary Magdalene retreated to a mountain cave on the plain of the Plan d'Aups known as La Sainte Baume (47 AD) where she remained alone for the last thirty years of her life in contemplation, prayer and penance. She is said to have been lifted up by the angels seven times each day at the canonical hours and fed heavenly nourishment. The tiny chapel of Saint Pilon on the crest above La Sainte Baume was built in memory of Mary Magdalene being raised by angels. When the time of Mary Magdalene's death arrived she was carried by angels to the oratory of Maximin, where she received viaticum. She died in Maximin's arms and her body was laid in an alabaster sarcophagus in an oratory he constructed in the Gallo Roman town of Villa Latta or Tégulata, which after Maximin's death became St. Maximin.

- b. Continuing on when the unexpected occurs
- c. Discussion Questions:

3. Challenging others

- a. Being sent together
- b. Mary Magdalene's example to the saints
- c. Discussion Questions:



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