

Delivered, Devoted, Declaring

‘Those forgiven of much love much.’ (LK 7:47)

Amid three July gatherings of sinners desperate for Jesus—the annual Courage Conference, Hope 2014 (RHN), and the Spanish Living Waters Training in Mexico City—we celebrated the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene—bad girl made good by the delivering hand of Jesus (‘from her seven demons came out...’ LK 8:2).

How fitting. Mercy alone purged her of pretty poisons, mercy alone provoked lifelong devotion to the only One worthy of it. At all three gatherings we followed the lead of the Magdalene in devoting ourselves to Jesus due to His delivering hand in our lives, be it from the rat’s wheel of lust, from the domination of same-sex attraction, or from the controlling influence of a loved one, still captive.

Marvelous. Mary Magdalene is the Gospel figure who highlights for us how moral and spiritual affliction cannot stand before the Lord of love. Instead, we the afflicted bow down before Mercy and are inflamed by the Fire that makes pure the most perverse. Nothing matters anymore but Him—to cleave to Him, to laugh and weep with Him, to feel what He feels more than the sway of sexy idols.

Mary lived out that devotion. She spent her life on Him, joining a small band of women whom He healed and who then gave all to support Him en route to Calvary. He became her life. When He died, so did the best of her. When ‘they took Him away,’ they took her heart. Perhaps that’s why, unlike the disciples, she wept and lingered at the tomb. The delivered don’t mess around. Love waits.

Of all His disciples, Jesus chose her to be the first one to whom He appeared—Christ Resurrected. That’s why the Church refers to Mary as St. Mary, the ‘Apostle of the Apostles.’ Astounding. Jesus entrusted the most important message on earth to a bad girl, made good (JN 20: 1-2, 11-18).

Today, we the delivered seek to devote ourselves to the One. We declare ‘the praises of Him who called us out of darkness and into His glorious light’ (1P 2:9). All three gatherings were thick with the fragrance of Jesus’ transforming love, a wooing love that brings sinners home to His rest, His Church.

I have not seen that kind of willingness on the part of the delivered to make known what Jesus has done in the specifics of deep and shameful choices. No more euphemisms or veiled allusions to ‘struggle’—as surely has Jesus has forgiven our sin, we name the sin so that Mercy might have its full effect on all who hear. One Catholic man in particular announced that he was giving up all his spare time this summer to any gathering that wanted to hear what Jesus has done to break the power of SSA in his life.

It is timely that this July marks the debut of two classy full-length documentaries that highlight

Jesus' unfailing love in the lives of persons with SSA. Check them out: [Desire of the Everlasting Hills \(everlastinghills.org\)](http://everlastinghills.org) and [Such Were Some of You \(purepassion.com\)](http://purepassion.com).

In a day when 'coming out' into some GLBTQRSTUVW variant is nearly boring, how fitting that God is raising up a Magdalene Army. By naming our affliction and its antidote, we testify of nothing less than Christ Resurrected. Delivered, we devote ourselves to Him and declare the wonders He has done.

'With Jesus everything; without Him, nothing.' St. Faustina