



***2016 World Youth Day, Poland***

**Feast of St Mary Magdalene – Mass  
Homily**

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The woman as recalled in today's Gospel, is the most misrepresented person to be found in the Gospels.

Mary has been described as a great sinner, who received the forgiveness of Christ. The Gospel of John says otherwise, Mary was healed from something very great that held her bound. We are not certain what it was that kept her this way. But she lived without true freedom and her life was demised.

The mission that God has for us, is that we should live a life to the full, in complete freedom. Mary was healed in a very deep way. She was restored to freedom and her life was renewed.

Mary was the first to go to the tomb on the Sunday of the Resurrection. She found the tomb empty and she was struck with double grief. How was it that after all that has been done to Jesus through his terrible death, his body now have been stolen! What more could his enemies do to dishonour him!

Mary went to the Apostles to tell them what she has discovered, and then returned to the tomb weeping. She wept for the death of the one who had liberated and healed her. Jesus has given her life back. Now, that source of her healing, the one who had released her from the thing that was binding her for so long, had been bound in a tomb. He was still treated with disrespect, as she believed, by having his rest in his tomb violated.

To her utter joy, she encountered Jesus, Risen from the dead. The Risen Jesus entrusts her with the mission to announce to the Apostles the fact Jesus lives. The source of his healing and new life, lives himself forever.

This is the story of Mary Magdalene. It is a great story and the written to be included in the Gospel. We need to remember that we all have our own stories. They are the stories of encounter we have had with Jesus. They may not seem to be as important or dramatic, they maybe just be plain and ordinary. But that does not matter, they are our stories, our histories with God. These events are precious, to be remembered from time to time.

Our World Youth Day pilgrimage is giving us more special moments of meeting the Risen Lord, the one who has the powers to unbind us from the things that take our focus away from Jesus.



These stories are about our experiences of God. Perhaps this story is how we feel a stirring to a deeper faith, a movement of consolidation, a time to be courageous and to be kind and respectful.

Such experiences are precious, for we can draw on them in the future as we grow in the Christian life. They are our own stories that we can tell to others. No one can argue against your experience. It will be your story. They will listen, as Mary was listened to by the Apostles, she was the apostle to the apostles. Her experience led them to the faith in the Resurrection.

Our stories can have the same power to lead our friends to faith and trust in Jesus Christ.