

Vox Populi
16 July 2026



On 22 July we celebrate the feast day of Saint Mary Magdalene, one of our most recognised saints, may also be one of the most mischaracterised saints in the history of the Church whose history is shrouded in various stories and legends.

Over time, she had come to be seen as a repentant prostitute, based off an erroneous interpretation of the Gospels by Pope St. Gregory the Great and others. Many subsequently shared the view Mary Magdalene was the unnamed woman described in Luke's Gospel, considered to be a prostitute. The original sources and even contemporary gnostic writings never suggested anything of the kind.

Mary Magdalene was cleansed by Jesus of seven demons and became a follower of Jesus, a supporter of His ministry, a witness to the Crucifixion and one of the first witnesses of the Resurrection.

As the Gospel of John tells us she was the first person to witness the Risen Jesus who sends her to tell the apostles of the Good News of the Resurrection. For this the title of Apostle to the Apostles was attributed to her by the early Church Fathers.

In these simple but profound moments, Mary Magdalene becomes the embodiment of what it is to be a Christian. She follows Christ, she encounters Him and she tells others of the Good News. No woman in the Gospels is mentioned more than Mary Magdalene except Mary, the mother of Jesus.

In his Easter message earlier this year, Pope Leo XIV encouraged Christians to all embody the spirit of Mary Magdalene and to carry the message of the Gospel to the world.

“Brothers and sisters, Easter gives us this hope, as we remember that in the Risen Christ a new creation is possible every day,” Pope Leo said.

“We need this song of hope today. It is ourselves, risen with Christ, who must bring Him into the streets of the world. Let us then run like Mary Magdalene, announcing Him to everyone, living out the joy of the resurrection, so that wherever the spectre of death still lingers, the light of life may shine.”

Just like Saint Mary Magdalene, may we be transformed by an encounter with Christ, and seek to spread the Good News.