

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MEDITATIONS YEAR A

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Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: **Luke 8:1-3**

1 Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

The women provided for Jesus

Meditation: Are you ready to serve the Lord Jesus and to support the work of the Gospel with your personal resources? During his three years of public ministry Jesus traveled widely. The Gospel records that a band of women accompanied Jesus and the twelve apostles. This was a diverse group of women; some came from rich and prominent families; some had been prostitutes, and others had been afflicted with mental and physical infirmities.

The women who served Jesus out of their own resources

We know that Mary Magdalene had lived a very troubled life before Jesus freed her from seven demons. She was privileged to be the first to see Jesus as the risen Lord. Joanna, who was the wife of King Herod's chief financial officer, was a wealthy lady of the court. It's unlikely that these two would have ever met under other circumstances. What brought them together and united them in a bond of friendship, service, and loyalty to Jesus? It was Jesus and his message of the kingdom of God that had transformed these women. Unlike the apostles, who took great pride in being the chosen twelve, these women did not seek position or demand special privileges. Jesus had touched them so deeply that they were grateful to do anything for him, even menial service. They brought their gifts and resources to Jesus to use as he saw fit.

Whose concerns do you put first - yours or others?

Are you more like the status-conscious apostles who were concerned for their position, or like the women who were content to serve Jesus quietly and generously with their personal resources? In our fallen state, our natural tendency is to want to be served and placed first and to avoid giving too much of ourselves to the service of others. And besides, who really prefers to take the lowly place of a servant who puts the needs of others before their own needs? Jesus is our best example who "came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom" for us (Matthew 20:28). The Gospel honors these women who imitated Jesus in his selfless sacrificial love and humble service.

Our privilege and joy is to serve the Lord Jesus

Our privilege as children of God and disciples of Jesus is to serve as Jesus served with humility, selfless love, generosity, joy, and a willingness to do whatever God asks of us. God, in his turn, gives us every good gift and grace we need to carry out our task and mission. God in his infinite power needs no one, but in his wisdom and love, he chooses to entrust his work through each one of us. His Holy Spirit equips us with all that we need to love and serve others. No one is unimportant or unnecessary in God's economy. The least in his kingdom find a home and a mission at Jesus' side. Do you know the joy of serving Jesus in company with others who love and serve him willingly?

"Lord Jesus, set my heart on fire for you that I may give freely of the gifts, talents, and resources you give me, for your sake and for the work of the Gospel."

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Everyone has something to give

by Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, 354-430 A.D.

"Frankly, even the poor have something they can share with others. Let one lend feet to the lame, another become the eyes of the blind, another visit the sick, and another bury the dead. These are the things that everyone can do. Lastly, bear one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ." (excerpt from Sermon 41,9)