

THE WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS

These women were the first Christian witnesses of the mission of Jesus of Nazareth. Some of their names we know, and some remain a mystery. All of them, however, embraced the teachings of Jesus, witnessed his healings, and were present as he offered himself as the Savior of the world.

NAME	SIGNIFICANCE	REFERENCE
Mary of Nazareth	Jesus' mother accepted her vocation at the invitation of the Archangel Gabriel, became the wife of Joseph, visited her cousin Elizabeth in her early pregnancy, prayed her <i>Magnificat</i> in solidarity with the poor, gave birth to the infant Jesus in a stable, and consecrated Jesus to the Lord. After fleeing to Egypt to escape Herod's murderous plot, Mary and Joseph returned and settled in Nazareth. Mary experienced the anxiety of losing Jesus for three days in the Temple, the joy of watching Jesus perform his first miracle at a wedding in Cana, the heartache of standing at the foot of the cross watching her son die, and the hope of his Resurrection. Mary, mother of the Church, was present at Pentecost.	Mt 1:16–25, 2:8–11, 13–23; Lk 1:39–42, 46–56, 2:3–19, 21–24, 39, 42–51; Jn 2:1–12, 19:25–27; Acts 1:12–14, 2:1–4
Mary of Magdala	After Jesus cast out seven demons from her, Mary became a patron of Jesus and the Apostles; she stood at the cross with the holy women, laid Jesus in the tomb and kept watch, brought spices to anoint Jesus, and was a primal witness to Christ's Resurrection. She called Jesus Rabbouni, Master, and he commissioned her to tell the brothers he had risen. Her proclamation, "I have seen the Lord," became a central creed of the Christian faith.	Mt 27:55–56, 28:1; Mk 15:40–47, 16:1–11; Lk 8:2–3, 24:1–11; Jn 19:25, 20:1–18
Martha of Bethany	The sister of Mary and Lazarus of Bethany, Martha was a patron and disciple of Jesus who proclaimed that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of God" and witnessed Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead.	Lk 10:38–42; Jn 11:1–44, 12:2
Mary of Bethany	The sister of Martha and Lazarus, Mary sat at the Lord's feet as a disciple while Martha continued with the duties of hospitality. She anointed Jesus' feet with perfumed oil. The anointing in the Gospels of Matthew (26:6–13) and Mark (14:3–9) may be the same story as the one in John's Gospel.	Jn 11:1–44, 12:3–8
Joanna Chuza	The wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, Joanna was a disciple of Jesus and served as patron for his community of followers. She was among the first to witness the Resurrection of Jesus.	Lk 8:3, 24:9–10
Mary Clopas	She was the sister of Mary of Nazareth, the wife of Alphaeus (Cleopas), and the mother of James the Less, Joses (Joseph), and Salome. She stood at the foot of the cross and accompanied Mary of Magdala to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body where they encountered angels who told them Jesus had risen.	Mt 27:55–61, 28:1–10; Mk 15:40–47, 16:1; Jn 19:25
Susanna	A patron and disciple of Jesus, she was listed among those healed from demons and other infirmities by Jesus.	Lk 8:3
Samaritan woman	Unnamed woman who met Jesus at a well in Sychar, Samaria. Offering her "living water," Jesus revealed his mission as the Messiah to her, and she became a disciple. The Eastern Church remembers the Samaritan woman as Saint Photini.	Jn 4:1–28

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