

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

'I was Jesus' friend'

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

My name is Salome. I knew Jesus well.

I remember well when I first met him. He came home one evening with my husband, Zebedee, and my two boys, James and John. It was several years ago. We lived near the Sea of Galilee, where Zebedee and the boys were fishermen.

That evening Jesus had dinner with us. My husband and sons were very excited. James and John said Jesus called them and asked them to follow him. None of us knew what that meant.

We had a lovely meal. All of us liked Jesus very much. He was so strong but so gentle. He was sensitive and kind. I could have listened to him talk all night.

He talked in pictures. You could see and feel everything he said.

That night I made a decision that changed my life. I decided that if my two boys could go with Jesus, so could I.

I knew what I would do. I decided to help support Jesus and his work. Several other women friends had the same idea. Mary Magdalene was one of our group.

We went everywhere he went — always in the background, as women in our time often were — but always with him. We bought food and saw that he and his disciples got enough to eat. So many people came to Jesus for help that he hardly had time to rest. He certainly didn't have time to cook.

Jesus appreciated all that Mary and I and the others did for him.

He became our friend. He didn't try to hide from us how tired he sometimes got, and how discouraged.

He shared with us his dreams and hopes too. Some of my happiest memories are of evenings when Jesus just relaxed with his disciples and with us as we served a simple meal.

There were very tense moments too, and scary times. I worried constantly about Jesus after we began spending more time in and around Jerusalem. We knew Jesus had many enemies. They did not like him because of what he said and did. Many nights I was so worried about him I could not sleep.

Then it happened. It was the saddest moment of my life. I stood not far from the cross, watching him suffer until he died. I held his dead body in my arms and helped lay it in the tomb. Mary Magdalene and I cried all that night.

But our tears soon changed to laughs. On the following Sunday Mary and I found his tomb empty. And Mary saw him alive. We all did in the evening. What a great day that was!

I have so many memories of Jesus. I feel he is with me even closer now than when we took care of him back in Galilee. I feel like one of the luckiest women in the world.

This fictionalized account of Salome is based on two biblical passages: Luke 5:8-11; and Mark 16:1-8.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of numerous catechetical books and articles for children.)

If her sons could go with Jesus, Salome thought, then she could too. Other women had the same idea. They followed Jesus and he became their friend.



Trust

After ordination to the priesthood in his native Ireland, Father Peter Quinn came to America to give his life of priestly service to the disadvantaged living in our poorest home mission areas.

Supported by grants from the Catholic Extension Society, Father Quinn has earned the trust of his Mississippi parishioners by devoted service to their spiritual needs. He is part of a team of home missionaries who, together with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in the United States. But the team is too small to do the job without help. It

needs new members. It needs you.

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Write for a free subscription to Extension magazine today and discover the difference you can make. Together, and with God's grace, we can achieve His missionary goals here in our own beloved country.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

- Imagine you are a child living near the Sea of Galilee. How do you think you would feel if your older brother came home one day and unexpectedly announced he was leaving home to follow an exciting prophet named Jesus?
- What could you do to remember your brother while he is away traveling with Jesus?

Children's Reading Corner

When we are with someone for a long time, they learn a lot about us and we learn a lot about them. Memories are part of the bond of love that holds people together when they have to be apart. In "A Book for Jordan," by Marcia Neufield, 9-year-old Jordan learns this lesson after her parents' divorce. While visiting her father after several months of separation, he surprises her with a wonderfully healing book — a book of memories for them to share together. (Atheneum Publishers, 122 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017, 1975. Hardback, \$8.95.)



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