

We read that when our Lord was on earth there were "holy women" who ministered to Him both in life and in death; and when the power of the resurrection had been manifested in Him, and consummated in the ascension, and the Apostles were waiting for those gifts of Pentecost which we have so recently commemorated; then we find that "the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus," consorted with them in the hallowed upper chamber in Jerusalem, and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" with the Apostles. And when the gifts of the longed-for Comforter had been shed upon the infant Church, and the Apostles and Brethren "went every where preaching the word," we are told by the Holy Ghost of a Priscilla and a Phœbe, of a Dorcas and a Lydia, of a Lois and an Eunice, and of others too numerous to mention, who in their several vocations of piety, of charity, and of domestic training, helped forward the word and work of Christ in different sections of the universal Church.

There is, indeed, some doubt still felt in the mind of the Church at home, what *name* should be assigned to those holy women who consecrate themselves especially to works of piety in the Church; but there is *no* doubt felt that holy works may be done by those whose hearts God has touched: and while it would be a vain quarrel of words to dispute, whether such an one should be called a *deaconess* or a *sister*, we cannot for an instant doubt the blessedness that rests upon that