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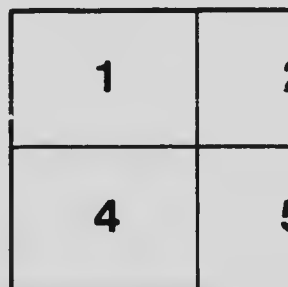
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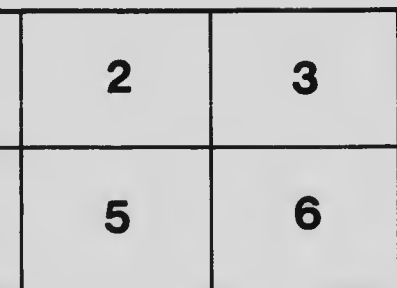
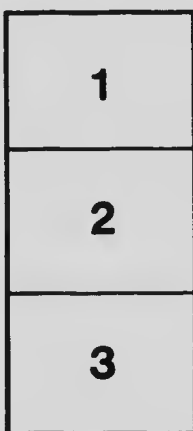
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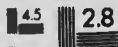
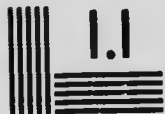
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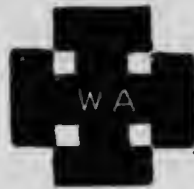
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The Love of Christ constraineth us.



# The Four Marys :

A Study in Missions.



*An Address delivered by Rev. A. P. Shatford, Montreal,  
at the Annual Meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary  
of Montreal Diocese, February, 26, 1910.*



Published by the Woman's Auxiliary to the M. S. C. C.

### AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The address here printed was delivered extempore, only very brief notes were made in preparation. It was written out at the request of the Executive Committee of the Montreal W. A., more than a month after its delivery. It is, therefore, to be expected that the phraseology will be considerably changed, but the subject matter is fairly correct. Those who heard the address may find some sentence altogether missing, or materially altered, or perhaps an occasional new one. But it ought to be remembered that the address is now offered to those who did not hear it, and the speaker would like to assure them that they have here a faithful reproduction of the ideas and thought.

# The Four Marys :

A Study in Missions.



The first missionary of the Gospel was Jesus Christ. His sense of mission was so strong that it overflowed His own heart and life and filled the lives of His immediate followers with a burning enthusiasm for the spread of the Kingdom.

Among these followers were many women. We hear so much of the efforts of the Apostles, that these women, and their splendid work are often overlooked. Let us to-day try to rescue them from the oversight which has been their lot, and to do them some measure of credit for their really magnificent missionary enterprise.

If one were seriously to entertain the idea that exists everywhere just now, the inevitable conclusion would be that women to-day are **unusually** surpassing men in their zeal for the Gospel. That it is true that women are more devoted to the cause of missions than men, we gratefully acknowledge, but this devotion is not exceptional. There has never been a time in Christian history when this was not true. If we go back to the very beginning, we shall find that in the dark hour of the world's tragedy, when "all the disciples forsook Him and fled," there were faithful women who stood by the Cross. In the days of our Lord's earthly ministry, there were women who accompanied Him and ministered to His needs. Indeed, I am glad to say that certain women helped Him first—He was never without their sympathy and aid.

Do not think that this is said because it is conventional or because it happens to be addressed to a body of two or three hundred women. It is the merest justice that necessitates the statement. These holy women of the first Christian days have been overlooked in a missionary way, and I trust it may be helpful to your Auxiliary if we go back to the original members and see how some of them fulfilled the missionary obligation.

We are going to study these early women because they all bear the sacred name of Mary.

But before taking up these individual lives, let us remember one essential thing. What was the compelling cause of



these women's devotion? What led them to consecrate their lives to so noble a cause? The answer is to be found in your motto,

**"The Love of Christ Constraineth us."**

Personal consecration to Christ—that was the dynamic of all their work. No other motive is strong enough. It has wrought all the miracles of missions. Someone has said that "the motives of deeds are the powers of deeds." If this be true then we can understand the tremendous force of the first missionary efforts, because they had their source and origin in **personal love of Christ.**

We hear much to-day of crusades for humanity, of works of charity and philanthropy. Far be it from me to diminish by one jot or tittle all that is said for these heroic undertakings. But let us remember this: There is more strength and endurance in a work that springs out of love for God and goes on to love for man, than that which originates in love for man and afterwards comes to love God.

We begin our tasks at the wrong end. There can be no doubt that a study of Christ's life and speech reveals the important truth. He laid every possible emphasis upon personal love and upon loyalty to His own person. Everywhere He was saying, "Follow Me! Lovest thou Me?" And when He was saying that love and devotion, then, and not till then, He gave His commission. All that the Apostles did, all that the Holy Women did, here is just this one explanation for it: "The Love of Christ Constraineth us."

Let us keep this in mind as we go on now to consider the Four Marys.

### **OUR FIRST MARY IS MARY MAGDALENE.**

She was of the city of Magdala. Some great affliction burdened her life. It is said that the Master cast seven devils of her. Commentators have rushed to the conclusion that she was a notoriously wicked woman. There is not a shred of evidence for it. Possession of devils in the Gospels by no means involves great wickedness. There are few, if any, cases, where gross immorality is suggested. Often these terrible afflictions were mental physical disorders where no hint of grave sensuality or sin is made. However, she had been tortured and tormented by this possession until life was intolerable. The merciful Master delivered her and

gave her peace and happiness. Forthwith she consecrated herself to His service. Out of a grateful love sprang her ministry.

For one whole year she accompanied Christ in His work, visiting all the towns of Galilee. She was a woman of means, for the Gospels tells us she "ministered unto Him of her substance." Can we not guess what this meant to Jesus during that busy and profitable year?

She was the last at the Cross when her Lord died. But here is the most inspiring incident of her life. She was the first to whom Christ appeared on Easter Day. He gave her the glad message of the Resurrection and she hastened away to tell it to the disciples. The world first heard the joyous tidings of the Risen Christ from the lips of a woman, and that woman Mary Magdalene. She was, therefore, the original witness, and the first missionary of the larger Gospel of Hope. What a peculiar honour and dignity was hers! We take this Mary, therefore, as **the type of the active missionary.**

My dear friends, our work must have its **living agents.** We need workers more than wealth. I believe that no person can be truly honest until she has first asked the question, "Can I go to the mission field?" Before we plead with others, we must first go upon our knees and ask that question, prepared to be perfectly honest in the answer that is given. And we are not to begin in the first place to raise all sorts of barriers and imagine all sorts of difficulties. It is so easy and so fatal to begin to make excuse. "Do I really want to go?" and if the desire is really there, can we not trust God to raise up someone in our place to do the home duties? If the Voice comes clear and sharp enough, "Go," shall we begin to silence it by raising cries of home needs and difficulties? The burning need of our time is men and women with trust big enough and desire strong enough to say, "Here am I: send me."

But we may not be able to offer for the foreign field. Still here is the home field. All the missionaries are not in Asia or Africa. There are crying needs here at home. There is the parish to be stirred up and aroused—who will become a parochial missionary? Are there not places where some one might start a branch of the Auxiliary? Are there not struggling missions where the service of a deaconess, of a consecrated woman, would be of inestimable value? "Who will rise up and who will go for us?" May we venture to hope that among all these women here to-day there may be found one or more Mary Magdalenes?

## OUR SECOND MARY IS MARY OF CLEOPHAS OR CLOPAS.

She was one of the three Marys who stood at the Cross and visited the tomb. Scripture distinguishes her from the other Marys by telling us the name of her husband, as also by declaring that she was the sister of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Cleophas died before our Lord's Ministry began even as also did Joseph, so that it is quite likely the widowed sisters lived together. This Mary had seven children—four sons and three daughters. You will recall the occasion when the Jews said of Jesus, "Is not this the Carpenter's Son? and are not his brethren called James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all here with us?" Some have argued from this that Christ was not the only child of the Virgin Mary—that He had brothers and sisters. But it was the commonest thing in those times to designate all blood relations "brothers and sisters," especially cousins. And what was more natural when we remember that the two families probably lived together? Jesus was an only child—our hearts are glad to be assured of that by the voice of tradition. These "brothers and sisters," alluded to by the Jews, were really the cousins of Christ, children of Mary and Cleophas.

Now of these four sons, we positively know that three of them became missionaries, and probably the fourth. James and Joseph were of the original Twelve, the former becoming Bishop of Jerusalem; and history tells us that he was succeeded in that office by his brother Simon. Mary, therefore, gave three of her children to the mission field. As her husband died when the children were comparatively young, their training was almost entirely in her hands. To her must be given the credit and honour of having sent them into this splendid work. She is therefore **the type of the sending missionary.**

My dear friends, if we cannot become missionaries ourselves, is there any one we can send or help to go? Or can we influence someone to offer himself? It is a terrible thing if some life is ready to outpour itself and we stop or check the outflow.

Mothers, I have a word for you to-day. The little lad whom God has given you, are you ready to teach him the heroism of missions? The curly-headed boy of your dreams and hopes, have you ever whispered to him of the Master's service? The biographies of missionaries tell us in wonder words of the mother's influ-

ence. Did not Robert Moffatt, David Livingstone, Alexander Duff, Macky of Uganda, and a host of others, catch their first missionary zeal from the trembling lips and overflowing hearts of mothers? The Earl of Shaftesbury tells us that his work of rescue was really started by the guidance and influence of his nurse. Who shall tell us of the possible missionaries in our homes to-day? Oh, for consecrated Marys who will give their sons to Jesus Christ! What powers there are in the cradles and nurseries! Have you ever heard **the Parable of the Acorn?**

I plucked an acorn from the greensward and held it to my ear, and it seemed to say:

"By and bye, birds will come and make their nests in me; I shall be fuel and warmth for many homes; I shall protect cattle from the blazing sun and provide ribs for the sea-faring ships, so that the storms of the Atlantic will beat against their sides in vain."

"What? You poor, weak, insignificant little thing," said I. "Shall you be able to do this?"

"Yes," said the Acorn, "**God and I.**"

I took a little child and held it against my heart, and it seemed to say:

"By and bye, I shall grow strong and big, and I will love the Christ and give money to missionaries, or go myself and teach the heathen of a Saviour's love, and many shall be brought into the Kingdom."

"What? You poor, weak, frail little creature," said I, "shall you be able to do this?"

"Yes," and the child smiled into my eyes, "**Christ and I.**"

Mothers, wives, sisters, teachers, have you ever encouraged or suggested to those within your trust the idea of becoming a missionary? The honor of having a son or daughter in the ministry or upon the far distant veldt or plains pleading for Christ? Do you know that there is a man in our city of Montreal who has given four sons to the ministry? Or shall I not rather say that there is a mother? I wonder if her name is Mary. Are we prepared to send those who want to go? It would be a dreadful thing to have upon one's conscience that there was one ready to offer, and that our lack of help and sympathy kept her back. Are there not Marys of Cleophas among you all?

## OUR NEXT MARY IS MARY OF BETHANY.

She and Martha and Lazarus lived together. It was the home where Christ was always welcome. Freely they gave of their hospitality to the tired and precious Lord. And on one occasion this Mary of Bethany brought forth an alabaster box of precious ointment, opened it, and anointed the Master's head and feet with it. It was a costly sacrifice. It represented a whole year's wages. But so fervent was her love for Christ that she gladly broke the box and anointed His body with the contents. And for that generous gift she received the warmest approval of the Christ. "Where-soever this Gospel shall be preached, this also that she hath done will be told as a memorial of her." The perfume of her gift has lingered through all the centuries. The house of the Church has been filled with the odour of the ointment.

Mary of Bethany is **the type of those who give to missions.**

She placed her home and her wealth at her Master's disposal. And now we must think of **money** for a moment or two, for we cannot do our work without it. On all sides we are crippled and held back because of its lack. And it is not because Christians have it not. For there is ample wealth in the treasuries of professing Christians to evangelize the world to-morrow, in so far as money can do it. There are alabaster boxes just bursting with stored abundance. All that is needed are consecrated hearts and hands, to break them open, and pour forth their contents. And we have only one appeal to make. We do not want to stir your emotions by harrowing tales of suffering and paganism. Pity and sympathy are not motives sufficiently strong. Here is a story to illustrate what I mean. A wealthy woman awoke one very cold morning and said to her maid: "Jane, after you have built my fire and brought my breakfast, you may carry a little coal and provisions to those poor people in the alley. They must be suffering this frightfully cold morning." In a little while the lady was sitting in a cosy chair, by a cheerful fire, sipping her coffee. She was all peace and comfort, so she said, "Jane, you need not mind about those alley people. The weather has moderated quite a bit and they cannot be suffering so much now." Her sympathy and pity had vanished in her own warmth and cheer.

We need something stronger than pity. Only love for Christ will open the alabaster box. We talk of giving money to this or

that purpose—why not give it to Christ? All our talk about love for the heathen is mere hypocrisy—we do not love them. But if we love Christ, our gifts will never fail. There are so many unworthy motives to giving. A man gives \$100.00 because his neighbor has done so, and he does not want to fall below him. That is not giving—it is buying your own respectability. Another gives so that his name may appear on the subscription list. He has not given. He has only paid for so much popular applause. Mary's motive was the right one, the love of the Master.

My dear friends, let us be unceasingly grateful for the sacrifices that have been made, but let us not rest until everyone has made sacrifices. May this year be a splendid one for your Auxiliary in the way of gifts. Go forward, never backward. Let the love of Christ constrain you, so that all the Marys may bring their alabaster boxes and empty their treasures at the feet of Christ.

#### **OUR FOURTH MARY IS THE BLESSED VIRGIN.**

When the Gospels open and we first see the Mother of our Lord, she is **upon her knees**. It is the occasion of the Annunciation, when the overwhelming message comes to her that she is to be Mother of the long-promised Christ. And kneeling there she sings her lowly song of adoration—a song that has been enshrined in our own splendid Liturgy. And her attitude, then, characterized all her life. We often read of her “pondering things in her heart.” She was of a contemplative, meditative nature. Her life was a life of prayer. And see how she intercedes for others at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. Who can measure the effect of that life upon her Divine Son? Did He not learn the lesson of communion with God from her sacred lips?

Let us now go to the Acts of the Apostles, where we see the Blessed Virgin for the last time. There, in the Upper Room, we behold her and she is again upon her knees. With the company of the disciples, she is praying for the infant Church. And when that Church rose from its kneeling place and went forth to its glorious work, can we not easily guess the source of its marvellous power? And as Mary's life opens for us with her upon her knees, so it seems fitting that we should last see her in the same attitude of fervent prayer. The Virgin Mary is, therefore, the **type of those who pray for missions,**

And can we close any address on missions without a reference to prayer? Is not this the source of all our power? The Church is not enough upon its knees. It is a deplorable weakness that our Prayer Book has so few definite missionary prayers. The reason is not hard to find. It was drawn up in one of the most un-missionary ages of the Church. But we shall fail utterly if we do not give heed to prayer. Just as the smallest stream, running like a silver thread down the hillside, and the wide, sweeping river, bearing navies on its bosom, draw their power from above, so all the streams and rivers of influence that run through the nations must draw their supply from above. The stories of success in the mission field are ever associated with prayer.

The year 1858 which has been called the *Annus Mirabilis* of missions, was the year when the week of prayer was first inaugurated. And do we not remember the China Inland Mission and its prayer for seventy missionaries in three years? Before the time expired there were seventy sent out. And there is the still more remarkable incident of the society in England, praying for 100 Missionaries. Whilst they were on their knees, a request came for the secretary to go to Oxford and Cambridge in order to use the marvellous spiritual opportunity that was presenting itself there. Before sunset, 100 students had enrolled themselves for the foreign field. "And it shall come to pass, before they call I will answer, and while they are speaking I will hear." These illustrations of the power of prayer might be multiplied indefinitely. But who seriously doubts the efficacy of prayer? Only we need to be more definite and persevering. To choose one particular field or work and make it a matter of earnest prayer for a whole week or month—that has always been a wise and effective plan. I am glad to know that the Woman's Auxiliary, through its Leaflet, is emphasizing definite and persistent prayer.

May you all be Marys in this particular! Pray without ceasing. Keep on your heart and mind all the needs of your local branch, and tell God about them. Plead with Him at all times for your smallest wants. No need is small with Him. Don't think of having a meeting without carefully telling all the members what you are going to pray for. Let the habit of saying prayers be forever dropped; we need to pray. There are so many addresses on the need of missionaries, the lack of money, the requirements of particular fields—but not often do we hear an address on **Prayer for missions.**

So let the last of the four Marys be the dearest and best of them all—the Interceding Virgin Mary.

Thus we have gone back to the Gospels and studied the originals that are found there. You see that we have a full programme of missions in these four Marys:

1. Mary Magdalene is the "going" missionary.
2. Mary, the wife of Cleophas, is the "sending" missionary.
3. Mary, of Bethany, is the "giving" missionary.
4. The Virgin Mary is the "praying" missionary."

May Marys of all these types be found among the members of the Woman's Auxiliary.





