

April 6, 2018

Dear Editors,

NBC's live broadcast of *Jesus Christ Superstar* on the night of Easter may very well have been "live TV at its best," as Rob Weinert-Kendt argues in his review for *America*. It was also a jarring reminder of the Christian community's shared responsibility to tell the true story of Mary Magdalene. We write to you today, because you have the voice to help correct a problematic tradition.

Misinformed by centuries of errant biblical interpretation, ignorance of early Christian history, and false artistic renderings, *Jesus Christ Superstar* becomes a part of that same distorted tradition and fails to deliver the Mary Magdalene of scripture that our Church and world need today. It falls on informed Christians, those in positions of authority in the Church, and responsible Christian publications such as *America* to reclaim and tell the truth about this great woman.

Scripture and early Christian texts reveal Mary Magdalene not as a repentant prostitute or the Mary (of Bethany) who anointed Jesus, but as a woman who supported Jesus' ministry with her own resources, one of the few disciples who stood by him even as he died on the cross, the first witness and preacher of the Resurrection, and an important leader in the early Christian community.

This is the Mary Magdalene the Christian community needs to remember today if we are to faithfully discern expanding roles for women in the Church. This is the Mary Magdalene we will need to reclaim if we are to authentically stand in solidarity with women of the #MeToo movement as they speak out and work to undo a culture that allows rich and powerful men to abuse and silence them for their own gain.

We appreciate the efforts you have made to remember and claim the true Mary Magdalene on your print and web pages. We encourage you to continue to do so – particularly at this time after 9.4 million viewers were misinformed about her once again on Easter Sunday.

#ReclaimMagdalene

Thank you,

Jocelyn Collen, Chair of the Board of Trustees of FutureChurch

Rita Houlihan, Board of Trustees of FutureChurch

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ReclaimMagdalene.org, FutureChurch.org