

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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After an incident of vandalism and burglary in Salt Lake City's Cathedral of the Madeleine, Utah Catholics are heartbroken at the destruction of a beautiful reliquary and the stealing of a precious relic of St. Mary Magdalene, the patron saint for the Catholic Church in Utah. The relic, brought to Salt Lake City in 1918 by Bishop Joseph S. Glass, has been housed in the reliquary for over one hundred years, and is annually displayed as an invitation to prayer on two days: Easter Sunday and July 22nd, the Solemnity of St. Mary Magdalene, the day on which Catholics throughout the world recall the heroic life of this early woman follower of Jesus.

"This is a very disturbing loss," said the Very Reverend Martin Diaz, the Rector of the Cathedral, "and we want to make every effort to find and restore this treasure for the people in Utah." "It is also important to acknowledge that Catholics do not worship relics: they serve as a physical reminder of the women and men who have lived generous and charitable lives on behalf of God and others. Our life of faith and service to the community will, of course, go on."

The Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City is the only Diocese and Cathedral in the United States under the patronage of St. Mary Magdalene. It celebrates the woman who was a close follower and supporter of the three-year public ministry of Jesus, who remained by his side throughout the suffering and death on the Cross, and who was given the privilege to be the first human being to encounter Jesus after his resurrection.

As the Catholic community prepares to celebrate the Feast Day of Mary Magdalene on July 22nd, it will do so with a keen sense of the loss of this small historic and physical connection to its patron.

If anyone in the community has any information about the whereabouts of the Relic, please make every effort to have it returned to the Cathedral. No questions will be asked. The relic is contained in an oval shaped metal and glass contained, placed on red velvet, measuring no more than 10" in height. It is of no monetary value, but priceless for Catholics in Utah. A reward of \$1,000 is being offered for the return of the Relic or information leadings to its return.

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