

Lydia insisted on providing hospitality to Paul and his companions, so they made their home with her while in Philippi. She continued to help them even after they were jailed and released.

As a successful businesswoman, her home would have been spacious enough to welcome guests and to become a place for community gatherings and liturgies.

Paul cherished the members of the Christian community at Philippi and called them his "joy and crown." Undoubtedly, Lydia's generous hospitality and leadership in the founding of this early Christian community contributed to Paul's affection.

***(excerpted from: catholicstewardship.com)



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SAINT LYDIA OF PHILIPPI

Feast Day: August 3rd (Latin Rite)



A woman of hospitality, faith, and a worshipper of God

Saint Lydia of Philippi

*As recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (16:12-30), Lydia of Philippi was the Apostle Paul's first convert to Christianity in Europe. Her conversion came after hearing Paul's words in Philippi proclaiming the Gospel of Christ during his second missionary journey.

As described in the Acts, Lydia was a "seller of purple", a person who traded in purple dyes and fabrics for which the city of Thyatira was noted. Purple goods were part of a high value industry and were used by emperors, high government officials, and priests of the pagan religions.

Tradition relates that she and her husband may have been involved in this business. At some point Lydia and her household moved from Asia Minor to the city of Philippi in Macedonia. The reasons she moved may have been business related as Philippi was a Roman colony on the major east-west trade route, the Egnation Highway, between Rome and Asia. Also, she may have been a Jewish convert who no longer could worship in the custom of the Thyatirans.

Lydia met with the Apostle Paul on his second missionary journey about the year 50. Paul and his companions started their journey visiting the established churches in western Asia Minor when he answered a vision in which he saw a man dressed in a Macedonian manner calling upon him to "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Paul's custom was to find local synagogues in which he would preach. But, apparently the Jewish population in Philippi was not sufficient to allow holding Sabbath Services for the Jewish men. Thus, Paul's party walked out of the city following the Gangites River (now called the Angista River) when they came upon a group of women praying in the manner of Jews, along flowing water. After greeting the women, Paul and his companions sat down and shared the good news of Christ's salvation with them. Lydia, among the women, had listened attentively and took the message to heart. She and her family were then baptized in the Gangites River along which they had been praying. Thus, Lydia became the first person in Europe to become a follower of Christ.

As Acts notes, Paul and his companions were well received by Lydia as they stayed at her house after their release from the Philippi prison. Surely, during their imprisonment, Lydia and those who assembled in her home spent the night in prayer for the release of Paul and Silas, making her home the first Christian Church in Europe. When Paul departed from Philippi he left Luke behind to preach the Gospel and to establish firmly the church in Philippi, using as its core Lydia, the jailer, and their households.

Paul speaks fondly, in his letter to the Philippians, of the brethren who were members of the church of Philippi, calling them "...my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown..." (Philippians 4:1).

*(excerpted from: www.johnsanidopoulos.com)

**Saint Lydia was born during the first century in Thyatira, a town famous for its dye works in Asia Minor, famous for its dye works, (hence, her name which means purple seller). She was a seller of purple dye and was St. Paul's first convert at Philippi. The following is from the Acts of the Apostles:

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, did hear: whose heart the Lord opened to attend to those things which were said by Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying: If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

~Acts 16:14-15

She was baptized with her household. Thereafter, Paul made his home with her while in Philippi.

Lydia was a woman of hospitality, a woman of faith. As a successful businesswoman she most likely had a home spacious enough to welcome guests and to use her home as a Christian center, where others would gather for the Holy Mass and prayer. After Paul and Silas were released from prison, they went immediately to Lydia's house to see and encourage the believers gathered there. Lydia served the Lord through her gift of hospitality by welcoming others into her home.

**(excerpted from: www.Catholicfire.blogspot.com)

***Lydia is the first recorded person in Europe to become a follower of Jesus Christ. She was Saint Paul's first baptized convert at Philippi. What we know of Lydia is found in the Acts of the Apostles. She was from Thyatira, an industrial center located in what is now western Turkey. She was a wealthy business-woman; a manufacturer and seller of purple dyes and fabrics for which the city of Thyatira was noted. Lydia was part of a high value industry. Purple goods were luxury items, used by emperors, high government officials, and priests of the pagan religions. At the time of the narrative in Acts, Lydia and her household had moved to the city of Philippi, a Roman colony on the Rome-to-Asia trade route. This is where she had her first encounter with Paul on his second missionary journey about the year 50.

While visiting Philippi for the first time, Paul and his party came upon Lydia and a group of women gathered by the river that ran through the city center. He sat down and shared the gospel with them. Lydia listened intently, took the gospel message to heart, and she and her family were then baptized in the river.