

HOLY WOMEN COMPANIONS: Ruth/Naomi and Mary Zhu Wu/Dianxuan

Partners and Companions

Ruth and Naomi (Old Testament)



During a time of warfare and lawless violence, here are two women returning to Israel together – one of them a foreigner, a widow, who refused to leave her mother-in-law. In their story, there are no mighty deeds, just two women trusting in one another, hoping in the God who watches over the weak, who fills the hungry, and restores life.

“Where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people will be my people, and your God my God.” Ruth 1:16

Reflection Questions: Call to mind those women and men in your life who have been/are the ones you can count to feed your spirit. Who are faithful companions in responding to the needs around you, those kindred spirits who with you can support others in need?

Mary Zhu Wu (1850-1900)



Mary was a Chinese mother of four, married to Zhu Dianxuan, the lay leader of the Christians in their village. During the Boxer Rebellion, Wu and her husband led their village in accepting nearly 3,000 Christian refugees. Mary was appreciated for her generous heart. Even after her husband was killed, Mary stayed with the people, some thousand Christians packed into the church. As the Boxers burst in she stood in front of the people, and held her arms out to shield them from the bullets. She was killed, along with many others. In 2000 she was canonized a saint.

“Trust in God and pray to our heavenly Mother.”

Reflection Questions: When do you experience “real” partnership or companionship? What are the key elements or qualities that mark such a relationship and keep it alive?

Prayer: Loving God, we pray in deep gratitude for the people in our lives who truly are our partners and companions in calling us to be our best selves, in supporting us when times are painful and challenging, and who celebrate with us in times of joy. Let us be for them what they are for us. May it be so. AMEN!

