

pagan community. But it was also during her eighteenth year that Paul and Barnabas, as we read in the Book of Acts, shook from their feet the dust of Antioch where they had been persecuted, and headed for Iconium. There, Paul and Barnabas "entered together into the Jewish synagogue, and so spoke that a great company believed, both of Jews and of Greeks." Driven out again by persecution, they nevertheless, after having preached in other cities, came back to Iconium "strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the Kingdom of God. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in Whom they believed" (Acts 14:22-3).

One of those who heard and believed was the young Thecla. She listened to them, then came back a second day, and then an evening, and a third day and evening, to hear more of what Paul and Barnabas were saying. By the end of that time she was a committed Christian and had made up her mind to live in virginity. She no longer had the slightest interest in marriage, desiring now to give her whole life and self to God, and certainly had no interest in the fiancé her parents had chosen for her, eminent and wealthy though he might be.

Thecla's mother was far from pleased. In those days, of course, parents had much stricter control over their children's lives than they do today, and to disobey the wishes of one's parents was a serious matter indeed. Added to this was the fact of Thecla's own family's high standing in the community. To be a professing and practicing Christian was still dangerous and certainly socially unacceptable, and a young girl who didn't wish to marry was an oddity at best. The mother tried talking, she tried beating, she tried starving Thecla, all to no avail. Finally she turned her daughter over to the authorities, in whose hands the first of the miracles of the young woman's life took place. The judge ordered her thrown into the flames, but she came out unharmed. She followed Saint Paul and his entourage to Antioch. There, one of the city leaders tried to seduce her, and when she forcefully resisted him he denounced her to the governor as a Christian who had an "unwomanly hatred" of marriage. She was condemned to death and thrown to the wild beasts, but they did not touch her. The amazed governor asked her, "Who are you and what is the power that you have in you, that nothing can do you harm?" Thecla answered simply, "I am a servant of the living God."

Perhaps because Thecla's was not the only story of wonderful powers of faith and strength which the governor was hearing, he let her go. It was a strange time of vicious persecutions of Christians on the one hand, and these constant examples of willing, even joyful, forbearance under torture on the other. The pagans, at least those who saw these things happening before their eyes, must have been uneasy or wondering at least. In any case Thecla's release by the governor freed her to preach the Gospel and she brought many people to faith in Christ.

But like others before her, Thecla found it difficult to stay in the larger world. With Saint Paul's permission, she retreated to a solitary place near Seleucia. She became known for her powers of healing, performing miracles over many sick people and bringing them to Christ in this way. Though she lived in the strictest kind of asceticism, owning nothing and carrying on a life of prayer and fasting daily, her solitary retreat became a place of pilgrimage not only for the sick, but for those who wanted her counsel on spiritual matters.

Even in her simplicity, though, Thecla could not altogether escape the world and its rivalries, jealousies and evils. Some of the pagan doctors in Seleucia, jealous of her abilities and popularity, sent young men to assault her. They did this believing that if she lost her virginity she might also lose her healing powers. Thecla fled from these young men and prayed for deliverance. God opened a rock as a hiding place for her, and she concealed herself there until she died.

St. John Chrysostom was later to write of Thecla, "I seem to see this blessed virgin going to Christ with virginity in one hand and martyrdom in the other." We might be tempted to ask why her virginity is stressed in this way, and it is important to realize that it is not because the Church believed that women who remained virgins were better than those who married. (It is true that early Church writers stressed the value of a virginal life as one that could be wholly given to God, but marriage was also valued by most of them.) Thecla's virginity was a way she chose to devote everything in herself to God. That she retained it was a sign of her steadfastness in being true to that choice. And her remaining a virgin was also a sign that the world, no matter how it tries, can never really overcome the resolve of a person to belong only to God. Some mighty worldly powers were thrown against Thecla, but she resisted them all.

Thecla is one of those who makes our excuses for not being true apostles seem pretty shabby. She did the work of the Lord despite many obstacles and negatives. If she could, so can we.

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of public administration and financial management. The text highlights that records should be kept in a clear, organized, and accessible manner to facilitate audits and ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific requirements for record-keeping, including the need to maintain detailed logs of all financial transactions, personnel movements, and other key activities. It stresses that records should be kept for a minimum of five years, unless otherwise specified by applicable laws. The document also notes that records should be stored in a secure and protected environment to prevent unauthorized access or loss of information.

3. The third part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in the overall management and operations of an organization. It notes that accurate records are crucial for decision-making, strategic planning, and performance evaluation. The text emphasizes that records should be used to identify trends, monitor progress, and address any issues that may arise. It also highlights that records should be shared and communicated effectively to all relevant stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of legal and regulatory requirements. It notes that organizations are often required to maintain records in accordance with specific laws and regulations, such as the Freedom of Information Act and the Access to Information Act. The text emphasizes that organizations must ensure that their record-keeping practices are fully compliant with these requirements to avoid potential legal consequences.

5. The fifth part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of organizational culture and values. It notes that accurate records are essential for building trust and credibility with stakeholders, including the public, investors, and other interested parties. The text emphasizes that organizations should strive to maintain high standards of record-keeping as a reflection of their commitment to transparency and accountability.

6. The sixth part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of risk management and crisis response. It notes that accurate records are essential for identifying and assessing risks, and for responding effectively to any crises that may arise. The text emphasizes that organizations should maintain records of all risks and incidents, and should use this information to improve their risk management practices and crisis response plans.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of data protection and privacy. It notes that organizations are often required to maintain records of personal information in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, such as the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Information Protection Act (PIPEDA). The text emphasizes that organizations must ensure that their record-keeping practices are fully compliant with these requirements to protect the privacy and confidentiality of personal information.

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9. The ninth part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of intellectual property and innovation. It notes that organizations are often required to maintain records of their intellectual property and innovation activities in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, such as the Patent Act and the Copyright Act. The text emphasizes that organizations should maintain records of all intellectual property and innovation activities, and should use this information to protect their intellectual property and promote innovation.

10. The tenth part of the document discusses the importance of record-keeping in the context of organizational governance and oversight. It notes that accurate records are essential for ensuring that organizations are governed and overseen effectively, and for promoting transparency and accountability. The text emphasizes that organizations should maintain records of all governance and oversight activities, and should use this information to improve their governance and oversight practices.