

Convention Talk by Mary Lappan

“A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one who worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to listen to the things which were spoken by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay”. So she persuaded us”.

This quote from the Acts of the Apostles is about the saint I have chosen, Lydia of Thyatira.

Not a lot is known about Lydia but by all accounts, she was an independent woman. Since there was no mention of a husband, it was very unusual for a woman in this time to invite strangers to stay in her home without a man's consent.

Lydia was a woman of means. She was a seller of purple cloth, perhaps her own business, thus she was known as “The Woman of Purple”. She owned a house and had a “household”, or servants. In order to accomplish this, Lydia had to be an excellent business woman. This was very unusual in a society where women had few rights, so there must have been something about her that made people trust her. Perhaps Lydia used fruits of the spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control – to make her business successful and like St. Paul, to spread the good news about Jesus.

How does Lydia fit in with the treasurer's position?

“Every organization must have sound financial control in order to meet its goals”. This quote from the Executive Handbook certainly exemplifies Lydia and a Catholic Women's League treasurer. In order for Lydia's business to succeed, as well as our parish council we need to have “sound financial control” over our accounts. Maintaining financial records and paying accounts are just part of a treasurer's job. Members must be confident that their hard-earned money is safe. Not only do we need to be trustworthy, we must ensure that our money is spent wisely. Like Lydia of Thyatira we need to be strong business women so we can promote the objects of the Catholic Women's League.