

APRIL 7, 2019
FIFTH SUNDAY
IN LENT



Mary shows Jesus extravagant love.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 12:1-8	Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany
Monday	Isaiah 43:16-21	The Lord will prepare the way
Tuesday	Philippians 3:4b-14	Running toward the goal
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 15:7-11	How to treat the poor
Thursday	2 Corinthians 2:14-17	Aroma of Christ
Friday	Isaiah 43:1-15	God promises restoration
Saturday	Psalms 126	A harvest of joy
Sunday	Luke 19:28-40	Blessed is the king who comes

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. **John 12:3 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, through Christ you touch us with lavish love and care. Help us to respond with reverence and joy for all that you do for us. Amen.

Mealtimes Prayer:

God of the harvest, we thank you for filling our bodies with good things and our hearts with joy. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord give you a heart to dream and a mouth filled with laughter and shouts of joy. (Psalm 126:1-2)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

You Are My All in All



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How do you show others that you care for them?
- Mary anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume. Why do you think she did that?
- God's love is extravagant. How do you experience God's abundant love?

DEVOTIONS



Read: John 12:1-8.

A wise adage says, "Take time to smell the roses." Life is to be experienced and enjoyed. Sometimes in the midst of our daily schedules and pressures, we forget to slow down and experience the joy of life in God's presence. Mary didn't. In fact, at great cost and with grand gestures she does the unthinkable. She used expensive perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. She broke the norm in her day of contact between men and women but not the norm of faith and love. The room was filled with a wonderful aroma. In the Gospel of John, Mary is the first person to act out her devotion to Jesus. As Jesus approaches Jerusalem and his impending death, there is a preciousness about life and God's saving work that Mary captures, a preciousness we are all called to capture and experience with deep reverence. It identifies a sensation that fills an entire room with the fragrance of the good news of Jesus Christ. How do you slow down to enjoy the beauty of God's presence and saving work in your life?

Pray: **Lord Jesus, you who gave everything to love us and save us from our sins, help us to pause, give thanks, and experience the joy of life in your presence. Amen.**

SERVICE



When Jesus says in John 12:8, "You always have the poor with you," some see it as an insensitive slight to the needs of the poor. However, Jesus was possibly referring to Deuteronomy 15:11, which *commands* generosity toward the poor "since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth." Mary's act of washing Jesus' feet with costly perfume was an extravagant act of kindness. In what ways can you show extravagant love for Jesus by caring for the poor with acts of kindness?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



In John 12:1-8, we learn that Mary [sister of Martha and Lazarus] spread on Jesus' feet expensive perfume (imported from the Himalayas). By anointing Jesus, Mary was pointing forward to his sufferings and death soon thereafter. Part of the Christian tradition is to lavish worship space with fragrances to represent the beautiful aroma of Christ in the world (2 Corinthians 2:15). Use perfume or scented oil to "anoint" your hands or those of another and then pray: **Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for us. Make our lives like a sweet perfume, attracting others to you. Amen.**



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