

Holy Monday

Collect and Reading

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, Amen.

John 12.1-11

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 2 There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. 3 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. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), 5 said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' 6 (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) 7 Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

9 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, 11 since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Reflection

Mary brought her dowry to Jesus. Remember that a dowry is the value of the person. This was what some man would take when he took her as wife, she had to pay to be taken in marriage. She brought with her the society's view of her worth. And all of this she gave to Jesus. Jesus took her gift but saw that the greater gift was that Mary understood his future, she brought the oil to anoint him for burial. This reading is filled with death, Jesus speaks of his own, the priest plot to kill Lazarus, and yet the story is filled with the scent of love, of gift and of value. Mary's gift was to say to Jesus that he was worth everything she had to give, and Jesus' gift you us is to say that we - his children - are worth all he had to give, his life. And he gave his life willingly. What worth has the life of God? He measured his worth in the lives he could save by giving up his own.

Prayers

We pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with:

Make your ways known upon earth, Lord God,
your saving power among all peoples.

Renew your Church in holiness
and help us to serve you with joy.

Guide the leaders of this and every nation,
that justice may prevail throughout the world.

Let not the needy be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Make us instruments of your peace
and let your glory be over all the earth. Amen.