

## A moment of extravagance

### Notes on the Bible readings

- On a day marked by some as Passion Sunday, Mary's passionate act of anointing Jesus' feet during a quiet meal with friends encourages us to consider the sacrifice of Jesus in this reflective Lenten period.
- The extravagance of the moment is felt throughout the whole passage. The perfumed oil that Mary used would have cost around a year's wages and the intensity of the fragrance filled the house (v.3). Her prophetic act is amplified in Paul's words, 'I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord' (Philippians 3.8).
- Judas' role is interesting. Was he predestined to play the role of antagonist, or did he have a choice? What were his motives for betraying Jesus, and when did Jesus first know about this? We can't answer these questions definitively, but Judas reminds us of our own sin and Jesus' acceptance of us, despite it.
- Similarly, the meaning of John 12.8 is unclear. Based on what we already know about Jesus, we can be sure he is not asking us to ignore the poor, but is bringing to the fore the need to balance social justice in a broken world, with adoration of a holy God. Jesus does not seek this adoration himself, but sets himself apart at this juncture to be the recipient of the worship due to God. How do we glorify God and grow in our devotion? And how do we balance that with the needs of others?

For reflection and comment linking this week's Bible reading to the news, current issues and events, go to [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com) and click on PostScript.



### Questions for reflection

- ▶ What do you see here: extravagance, showing off, or something else?
- ▶ How extravagant is the worship in your church?
- ▶ How do you express your devotion to Christ?



### A prayer of praise

*With all our hearts, we come to worship you.  
With all our minds, we offer you our praise.  
With our whole being, we honour you.  
May all that we do, all that we say,  
all that we think and all that we feel,  
bring glory to you: our creator and redeemer.  
Amen.*

### A prayer of thanksgiving

*For homes and food; for families and friends;  
for all that we often take for granted –  
generous God: we give you thanks and praise.  
For your loving presence in our lives;  
for strength and guidance; comfort and peace –  
generous God: we give you thanks and praise.  
For the gift of Jesus;  
for his living and teaching; for his healing and example;  
for his dying and rising –  
generous God: we give you thanks and praise.  
For all that you have done for us;  
for all that you are for us; for all that you will be for us –  
generous God: we give you thanks and praise.  
Amen.*

### A personal prayer

*Worship and honour,  
glory and praise be yours,  
eternal God, today and always.  
Amen.*

### Live your faith

Look for opportunities to give generously of time, money or possessions – and do so cheerfully, because God has given so much for you.