

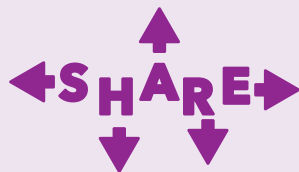
John 12:1-8

What's your passion?

The readings this week prompt us to question what really matters to us and to think about the important priorities in our lives – what are our true passions? On the last Sunday in Lent, we begin to look ahead to Palm Sunday and on the intense last days of Jesus' life.



Mary, Martha and Lazarus are a family. Who is in your family? What do you like to do together? Play games, support a sports team, get outdoors, watch films, make or bake things...? God created our families. Choose to spend some time this week playing and praying together or reading a Bible story.



You will need: a timer and a box/step stool.

What's so important to you that you'd be prepared to stand on a soapbox and tell everyone about it? This is your passion. Give everyone the chance to stand on the box (soap optional!) and speak for one minute (use a timer) without interruption about their passion.



Listen to 'Pour my oil' by Legacy Nashville
<https://bit.ly/3BbPrp6>



Bible notes

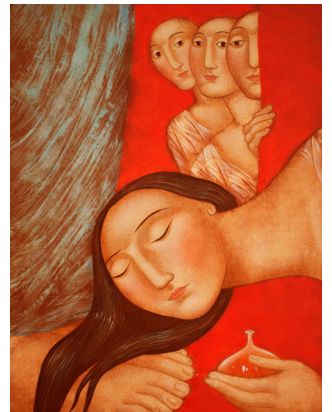


Each Gospel has an account of Jesus being anointed by a woman. In Matthew 26:6-13 and in Mark 14:3-9, an unnamed woman anoints Jesus' head in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany, 'two days before the Passover' (Mark 14:1). In Luke 7:36-50, during Jesus' earlier ministry in Galilee, an unnamed 'woman in the city, who was a sinner' anoints his feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee. In John, the anointing is 'six days before the Passover'. As in Matthew and Mark, the anointing is with very costly ointment and takes place in Bethany, just east of Jerusalem where Jesus is about to be crucified. But uniquely, in John's narrative, the woman is named. She is Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, and her anointing of his feet happens in their Bethany home. Importantly, it is part of the extended story (11:1-12:11) of Jesus' relationship with the three siblings, all of whom he loved (11:5), and whose invitation to dinner he has accepted. He has said to Martha, 'I am the resurrection and the life', and she has responded, 'Yes, Lord, I believe' (11:25-27). He has raised Lazarus, who has become a living witness to the truth of Jesus' words. Because of this the chief priests plan to put Lazarus to death (11:53, 12:9-11).

Now Mary anoints him in explicit recognition that there is no way to resurrection without the cross. The fabulous cost of the nard suggests that Mary's passionate commitment to Jesus is total. And John attributes strong emotions to Jesus, too, in his relationship with the siblings: he is 'deeply moved'; he 'began to weep'; and is 'again greatly disturbed' at the tomb of Lazarus (11:33-38). His passionate commitment to all those he loves is about to cost him nothing less than his life. He recognises that Mary has kept the ointment 'for the day of my burial' (v.7). There will be no anointing after his death because he will be raised. By her costly act, Mary proclaims Jesus' death and resurrection and commits herself to him passionately.

First impressions

- What are you most passionate about, and why?
- What strikes you most about Mary's act of passion and worship?
- What sacrifices are you prepared to make for your faith?



Pray

All that makes me happy, I place at your feet, Lord.
All that makes me sad, I place at your feet, Lord.
Everything that matters, I place at your feet, Lord.
Be with me every step of the way. Amen.



Make a fruit salad including a fruit liked by each person in your household. We each have different things we enjoy eating. Smell each fruit and, as you eat the fruit salad, savour the flavours of each fruit.