

Nurturing Faith... Every Day in Every Way

March 13, 2016

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalms 126

Philippians 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8



Giving Him Your Best. Object: Bring something which you might consider to be your most prized possession

This ring is one of my most prized possessions. I don't know how much it is worth, but it is of great value to me because it belonged to my grandmother. In fact, it is the only thing that I own that belonged to my grandmother. I would never consider selling this ring, because it is worth more to me than any amount of money that I might get if I sold it.

If I were to ask you to name your most prized possession, what would it be? To some of you, it might be a stuffed animal that you have had since you were a baby. To another, it might be a favorite doll. To someone else, it might be a ball autographed by a famous baseball player. If a friend came to visit in your home, would you give your most prized possession to that friend to show your love? That is what a woman named Mary did in our Bible story today.

One day Jesus went to the city of Bethany. That was the city where a man named Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, lived with his two sisters, Mary and Martha. While Jesus was in Bethany, a dinner was given in his honor. Lazarus was eating at the table with Jesus, while Martha was serving the meal. Mary was just sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to him teach.

As she was sitting at the feet of Jesus, Mary did a very unusual thing. She took a bottle of very expensive perfume and began to wash the feet of Jesus with it. Then she dried his feet with her hair. The Bible tells us that the entire house was filled with the sweet smell of perfume.

One of Jesus' disciples, whose name was Judas, was very upset by what Mary did. He said, "What a waste! This perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor. It was worth a year's wages." Judas wasn't really worried about the poor. The Bible tells us that he was worried about the money because he often stole money from the treasury for himself.

Jesus came to Mary's defense and answered Judas. "Leave her alone. She has kept this perfume for the day of my burial."

Jesus said that because he knew that it was only a few days before he would be crucified and buried. I don't know if Mary knew that or not, but I do think that Mary wanted to give Jesus the very best that she had to show her love for him. That perfume was the very best thing that Mary had to offer.

Jesus has given us the most wonderful gift imaginable -- the gift of everlasting life. It is free, but it was a very costly gift. It cost Jesus his life.

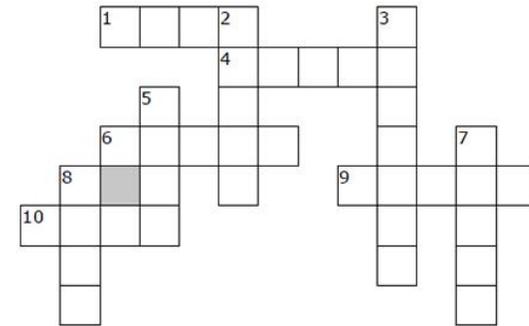
What can we give to Jesus to show our love for him? I don't think he wants a diamond ring, a stuffed animal, a doll, or an autographed baseball. I think he wants us to give him our very best. He wants us to give him our life!

Gospel Acclamation: Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14)

Heavenly Father, Jesus gave his life to show his love for us. May we also give our lives in service to him as an expression of our love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- The part of the body on which a person stands
- The building in which a family lives
- What we use to buy things
- The disciple who betrayed Jesus
- What grows on the head of a person

DOWN

- A person who steals
- A liquid produced and sold for its pleasant smell
- The opposite of rich
- Pay received for the labor of a worker
- The woman who poured perfume on the feet of Jesus

JUDAS	HOUSE	FEET	MARY	MONEY
POOR	THIEF	PERFUME	WAGES	HAIR

BOTTLED BIBLE VERSE: Give each child an empty toilet paper roll and let them cover it with pretty wrapping paper to make it look like a perfume bottle. Let children use markers to write at the very top of the "bottle of perfume - toilet paper roll" whatever name they'd like to give to their own perfume bottle (such as Midnight Delight, Rose Petals, Coffee Brew, Fishlips, or anything silly or serious from child's imagination). Give a piece of paper to each child with today's Bible verse written on it to glue or tape to the decorated toilet paper roll.

HEART BUTTONS: Give the children a piece of foam or construction paper to draw a small heart and cut it out and write GIVE JESUS MY BEST and tape or pin the heart "button" on their clothes.

MARY ANOINTS JESUS' FEET

John 12:1-8

