

Nov 7/21 – Small Group Questions - Read John 12:1-11

1. What reasons would Mary have for expressing her grand and extravagant gesture of devotion to Jesus in the company of her friends and family?

In other gospels, an unnamed woman who was described as a sinner was the one who poured the nard on Jesus' head or feet. This could be Mary. It could be another person. There is ongoing debate whether Jesus' anointing happened once, twice, or three times. Regardless, Mary had several reasons to worship Jesus in her own way: Jesus raised her brother back from the dead, her own sins were forgiven by Jesus, she witnessed many other people's lives changed by Jesus.

2. What reasons do you have to express your own gratitude and worship to Jesus in public or in private?

Answers may vary. Permit others to share freely of their personal encounter of Jesus, how He changed our lives, how He continues to change our lives.

3. Judas shook his head at Mary's personal gesture of worship for Jesus. How are we today tempted to behave and react as Judas did towards others?

In the age of polarisation through social media, we are divided and balkanised as a society. We are tempted to entrench further and deeper into our own views and perspectives, especially when we only listen and learn from people and outlets with similar views. Doing so, we push others away and dismiss those with divergent views and opinions. We are choosing to not understand them, not to learn from them, and not to engage with them. We then demonize others and make them out to be enemies, evil, ignorant, and stupid.

4. How do we foster in ourselves and in others our free, genuine, and generous worship and devotion to Jesus?

We must discipline ourselves to oppose and resist the critical spirit of this age. We then discipline ourselves to take on a disposition of humility, of openness, of open ears and hearts towards the voices and pleas of others, to take the risks of being discomfited and challenged in our own perspectives. We must not presume to be the worship police of this world on behalf of God. Only God is the One to receive our human praises and that is the business between the person and God. Let us in our own ways submit to God's will and give of ourselves in our own personal ways.