

Wednesday

Read John 12:4-6 *Judas complains*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Judas speaks up against Mary's actions. He says the money should be given to the poor. Is he right? Aren't we supposed to give to the poor?*
2. *Judas was more concerned with money than with Jesus or Mary or the poor. What happens when we put a price on everything?*

Prayer Focus: Living God, we are so good at looking out for our own interests that we forget you. Break open the tight hold we keep on our hearts, pour us out. Show us again how to live in love with you.

Thursday

Read John 12:7 *Jesus rebukes Judas*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *If Mary was saving the perfume for Jesus' burial, why would she use it while he was still alive?*
2. *What is Jesus trying to say and show the disciples by letting Mary take care of him in such a radical way?*

Prayer Focus: Reflect on how Mary wasn't going to wait until Jesus was dead to show him love and honor. Consider when and where you hold back, afraid that the time and your actions aren't "correct?" Pray for the trust Mary showed at that dinner.

Friday

Read John 12:8 *The poor among us*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Mary was preparing the way through the wilderness of danger and threats and even betrayal for Jesus. How can caring for someone give them strength?*
2. *How can we make a difference if the poor are always with us, no matter how much we may give?*

Prayer Focus: God of all, help us remember that we have the poor with us in all parts of life. That they are with us always because they are full members of our community, of the family. Help us recognize the poverty each of us knows. Help us to be lavish with our love and our giving, as Jesus gave to us.

Anointing of Jesus by Mary

John the Baptist prepares a way for Christ in the wilderness of the desert. Mary prepares the way for him in the wilderness of the city. At the moment when Jesus is most isolated, Mary blesses him and anoints him for the difficult journey ahead. How do we respond when we find others facing the wilderness places of their own lives?

Message Notes:

Small Group Format

Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *What are some of your favorite scents? Share any special memories or associations that you have with those scents.*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Scripture

- Have someone read **Luke 12:1-8** Discuss observations about the text.
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?* (This is a weekly question - it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

April 7, 2019
Mary Anoints Jesus



Monday

Read John 12:1-2 *Jesus has dinner with friends*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Recall the story of Lazarus and his sisters (John 11:1-44). Consider their special relationship with Jesus and what it meant to each of them. How did it make this dinner special?*
2. *The scribes and Pharisees were planning to kill Jesus after he raised Lazarus. His every move was being watched. Do you think Lazarus, Martha, and Mary knew he was to die soon?*

Prayer Focus: Blessed One, thank you for the blessing of friendships. Thank you for the joy of sharing meals, for remembering stories. Help us remember that life is not something to be saved up and parcelled out, but to be celebrated, in your name.

Tuesday

Read John 12:3 *Mary washes Jesus' feet*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *What Mary did went against all sorts of laws and social customs. Why do you think she was moved to make such an extravagant, even dangerous, gesture?*
2. *Perfumes were poured over the heads of royalty to anoint them as kings. But Mary pours this perfume over Jesus' feet. What does that say about Jesus? About his life and death?*

Prayer Focus: Creator and giver of all we have, help us to see the witness of Mary. Inspire us with her love. Give us the courage to offer our love, to spread the fragrance of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, and hope that we find in trusting you.