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WEEKLY LETTER – 3 April 2022

John 12.1-8

Judas struggles to understand what unfolds before his eyes

In this passage we find that Judas struggles to understand Mary's action, and in so doing cannot accept Jesus' role in this scene. I don't know what it is like for you as you read about Jesus' life, but often, I find it far from easy to comprehend what Jesus means or is really doing. Therefore, I think it highly likely that I too would have responded in the way Judas reflects on this extraordinary scene of Mary washing Jesus' feet.

This struggle to understand is not confined to this passage, as I often find Holy Scripture more challenging because of its greatness and gravity. Perhaps this is true for you? So for example, in many people's lives, especially those of us who are retired, a whole series of fundamental decisions have already been made and we are now bedded in life, which has a clear shape. But when we consider Jesus' life, not only do we feel the greatness of Christ's words and actions we wonder, what is Jesus' really saying, and do I want to hear his truth. So for example, words of wrath, of rejection, the threat of judgement became increasingly more mysterious, and possibly more grave and awesome, than we at first thought?

Thinking this, does not mean what is said is wrong, or we are not capable of understanding, rather we know we have to wait, pray, discuss and keep on with the struggle. This is why we know that faith coupled with thinking is at the heart of our discipleship.

I hope during this profound period you will continue to have a strong desire to reflect on Holy Scriptures, on the mystery of humanity's redemption brought about by Christ's life and words, and so continue to discover the truth of God revealed to you in Christ.

Stephen

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom, at 10.30 am will be led by Rev David Salsbury. We will celebrate Communion. Bible Reading: John 12.1-8.

Cycle of Prayer in the Swansea Region – we will pray for Hall Street, Llanelli.

The Faces of the Church (Lectionary Readings; Isaiah43.16-21: Psalm 126: Philipians 3.3b-14: John 12.1-8)

Such lavish love, the costliest of gifts,
such a passionate gesture, skirting the edge of decency.

Breath-taking, the air crackling,
Martha in the kitchen cooking;
Judas prioritising the poor.
Mary lost in love and sorrow,
for in her mind's eye is a cross on a bleak hill
and she counts the cost of love.

Gracious God, hear the prayers of your church for we are Judas,
the needs of the poor, victimised and wretched overwhelm us,
and we too would empty the treasury to stop the pain.

For we are Martha,
in the kitchen, self effacing, doing the admin,
making it all work,
resentful of those who don't put their shoulder to the
wheel.

For we are Mary,
lost in wonder and adoration for a love
that embraces frailty and dies our death that we might live,
and we too would pour our gifts at Jesus feet.

Hear our prayers for the sake of our Lord Jesus,
champion of the widow's mite, wonder-worker with loaves and fishes,
who takes all our love
and makes it the energy of his kingdom.
Amen.

(David Cornick – URC Prayer Handbook 2022)

