

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Mar 25th 2024**

### **A jar of perfume worth 300 and a Master worth 30!**

It is the first day of the Holy Week. We prepare ourselves to celebrate the mysteries of the death and resurrection of Jesus. We call them mysteries because, with human intelligence and wisdom, we will never be able to comprehend or explain them. As we begin our journey through the Holy Week today, let us join this family of Lazarus and his two sisters – Martha and Mary, a family that Jesus loved. This family – re-united miraculously after Jesus brought Lazarus back to life – knows that no welcome is too lavish for their most honoured guest.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus seem to understand that Jesus has fixed his eye on Jerusalem and is on the go. They didn't ask questions. They simply had their home open to him. They loved him - true love, true friendship.

Perhaps they sensed that it was their last chance... a final opportunity to show their undying loyalty to their Lord before his impending passion and death. It was more than a visit of a dear friend ... it was the farewell gathering! It appears that the family of Lazarus, Mary in particular, was fully aware of the intensity of the occasion. When emotions run high, one has nothing much to talk...

They could feel something painful was going to happen to their Lord. Lazarus shares the table with Jesus while Martha serves them. Then happens the profoundly intimate act of Mary – the anointing. This woman had seen, heard, and secretly acted upon Jesus' open prediction of his coming suffering and death. How does she express the emotions she feels? With gestures that display her affection and feminine sensitivity: the perfume, the kisses, loosened hair, the tears. These are gestures that could rattle and scandalise those around. She loved him much.

On the other hand, the disciple who was handpicked by Jesus and had accompanied him during his preaching and healing ministry could only read the calculations of income and expenses! Three hundred silver coins were what he calculated for this jar of perfume. In a few days from now we would find him fixing an amount for his Master, it was a mere 30 silver coins! His Master whom he followed for three years, was 10 times less worth than a jar of perfume!

Does it ring familiar? Do we come across people in our Church communities who are vociferous for their concern for the poor and find faults with everything that happens in the Church? We too, make wrong calculations in our lives – when we consider our social status, power, and positions more valuable than friends and family. When we give to the Lord, it is either everything or nothing.