

Closing Prayer

Compassionate God,
you gather your people in prayer
and lavish your gifts upon us anew.

Sinners that we are,
you have forgiven us much.
Grant that our experience of your pardon
may increase our love
until it reflects your own immeasurable forgiveness.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Opening prayers · 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C²

CPL • LBC Year C Proper 06.odt • 2022-06-08

² *Opening prayers* : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.

Proper 6

*Sunday between 12 and 18 June inclusive, if after Trinity
Sunday (11th Sunday in Ordinary Time)*

Principal Service readings

2 Samuel 11.26—12.10,13-15	David is rebuked by Nathan and repents
Psalms 32	Admission of sin and trust in God's love
Galatians 2.15-21	The gospel as preached by Paul
Luke 7.36—8.3	A sinful woman anoints Jesus feet; other women

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
speak to our hearts in the stillness,
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

Gospel Reading

A sinful woman anoints Jesus

³⁶One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. ³⁷And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. ³⁸She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him – that she is a sinner.' ⁴⁰Jesus spoke up and said to him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' 'Teacher,' he replied. 'Speak.' ⁴¹A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he cancelled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?' ⁴³Simon answered, 'I suppose the one for whom he cancelled the greater debt.' And Jesus said to him, 'You have judged rightly.' ⁴⁴Then turning towards the woman, he said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶You did not

anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.⁴⁷Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.’⁴⁸Then he said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’⁴⁹But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, ‘Who is this who even forgives sins?’⁵⁰And he said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’

‘Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him,² as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,³ and Joanna, the wife of Herod’s steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Luke 7.36—8.3 NRSV¹

Comments and Questions

The meal in Simon’s house takes place in Galilee, the place where Jesus appointed his apostles and where his ministry began. Some commentators think the passage is about the Eucharist and hospitality. From the early Christian community the ‘meal’ envisaged unity. But Jesus also said: ‘I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to conversion’ (Luke 5.32). Luke shows the policy of inclusion in this story. It is also the story of a woman, foreshadowing chapter 8 in which Luke demonstrates the place and role of women in the community.

The mention of the alabaster flask shows the great respect she has for Jesus. It is unusual to anoint the feet, rather than the head, but placing the woman at Jesus’ feet indicates that she is a disciple, and, her wiping his feet with her hair shows her great devotion.

Jesus eating in the house of a Pharisee indicates solidarity with the Pharisees – they also are heirs to the message. How will they respond? The Pharisee reacts with indignation to the actions of the woman; he does not see their significance.

Jesus then tells a parable based on the cultural understanding of patron and client. This was an unequal relationship as one had power over the other. As the person in power, the patron shows unexpected grace and

forgiveness. In Jesus’ parable the debt is repaid through love – the greater the debt forgiven, the greater the love. Jesus contrasts the Pharisee’s lack of love with the woman’s love, which was lavish and generous. All who had been forgiven were welcomed with open arms. The woman, like the tax collector (Luke 7.29), had acknowledged God’s judgement on her and had received forgiveness from God. The Pharisee, on the other hand, had not accepted God’s judgement on himself, and consequently had not received forgiveness.

Quotations

1

Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart.

Corrie Ten Boom, 1892–1983

2

Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.

Martin Luther King Jr., 1929–1968

3

I think that if God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise, it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him.

C. S. Lewis, 1898–1963

4

Forgiveness is the name of love practiced among people who love poorly. The hard truth is that all people love poorly. We need to forgive and be forgiven every day, every hour increasingly. That is the great work of love among the fellowship of the weak that is the human family.

Henri J. M. Nouwen, 1932–1996

Related topics

For further study:

Eucharist; conversion; reconciliation; repentance; forgiveness; sin

¹ New Revised Standard Version Bible is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.