

Space for God A Lingering Fragrance

PREPARATION

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. Isaiah 61:1

WORSHIP

But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ's triumphal procession. Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume.
Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God.
But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom.
But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this? 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

CONFESSION

You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God.
For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. Ephesians 5:5-6

MEDITATION – John 12:1-11*

Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.

But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor." Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself.

IN SOLITUDE AND/OR COMMUNITY		
Read	Slowly, several times.	Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial.
Reflect	What does the text say?	You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always
Respond	How does it relate to my life?	
Rest	I welcome God's healing and renewal.	

have me."
When all the people heard of Jesus' arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.

ANCHORING PRAYER
Immanuel. You are with me.

REVIEW OF THE HEART
*What sacrifice have I made for Jesus that makes no sense to others?
When have I selfishly withheld the pouring out of my love and service towards others.*

WISDOM
Give generously to the poor, not grudgingly, for the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do. There will always be some in the land who are poor. That is why I am commanding you to share freely with the poor and with other Israelites in need. Deuteronomy 15:10-11

And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Philemon 1:6

If you are a thief, quit stealing.
Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. Ephesians 4:28

TESTIMONY *What is God saying to me?*

INTERCESSION *Prayers for the Church, for others, and for me.*

BENEDICTION

But– When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.
[Amen]
Titus 3:4-7

SPACE FOR GOD DAILY
Be still and quiet before God.
Seek the Holy Spirit's filling and guidance.
Speak and act from a listening heart.
Actively serve in community with others.

PermaneSED (Abide) Kurt D. Peters. **Bold** portions to be read in unison. *Lectionary, Year C
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