



Daily Reflections

September 20, 2018

Scripture

Luke 7: 36-50

A certain Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him,
and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

Now there was a sinful woman in the city
who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee.

Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment,
she stood behind him at his feet weeping
and began to bathe his feet with her tears.

Then she wiped them with her hair,
kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself,
"If this man were a prophet,
he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him,
that she is a sinner."

Jesus said to him in reply,
"Simon, I have something to say to you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two people were in debt to a certain creditor;
one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty.
Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both.
Which of them will love him more?"

Simon said in reply,

"The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven."

He said to him, "You have judged rightly."
Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon,
"Do you see this woman?
When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet,
but she has bathed them with her tears
and wiped them with her hair.
You did not give me a kiss,
but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered.
You did not anoint my head with oil,
but she anointed my feet with ointment.
So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven;
hence, she has shown great love.
But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."
He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."
The others at table said to themselves,
"Who is this who even forgives sins?"
But he said to the woman,
"Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Our Scripture Reflection

What a pathetic hypocrite Simon the Pharisee truly is! The sinful woman carries out a humiliating act of loving service to Our Lord. Simon would never shrink his inflated ego to do such a thing. The woman is forgiven completely because she loves unconditionally. She, not Simon, is a model of true and sincere faith.

Food for your Journey

Many of us can identify with the woman who anointed Jesus' feet, but a less appealing prospect is to identify with Simon the Pharisee: Simon the judgmental, Simon the supercilious, Simon who couldn't even show the common courtesy of a welcoming kiss, but who still believed himself several cuts above the repentant woman.

The problem is, if we are like Simon, we are not apt to know it, for Simon was blind to his need for forgiveness. Jesus did not tell the parable of the two debtors for the woman's benefit, but for Simon's. When a person suffers from

sin-hiding blindness, it often takes direct confrontation or a particularly apropos example to force insight.

If we don't see any of Simon in our own character, it may be because he doesn't lurk there...but it could be because Simons always have trouble seeing themselves as they are. Jesus confronted Simon with the parable to make him see. We can use the parable in the same way to confront ourselves.

When we do, we are likely to discover we possess elements of both the woman and Simon, and both need much forgiveness.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, The sinful woman in today's Gospel serves as a loving example of genuine humility. Help me to follow her example. Remove all pride, arrogance and self-concern from my heart and help me to love You as she loved You. Amen