

Archive for May, 2014

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And the Perfume Filled the House

"Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." John 12:1-3

This is an amazing tale of love and devotion from a woman who always seemed to be in trouble. Not bad trouble but trouble that comes from misunderstandings or not living up to other people's expectations. She got in trouble for sitting at Jesus' feet, she got in trouble for wanting to learn; she got in trouble for worshipping at his feet. She even got in trouble for an offering of exorbitant value. She got in trouble with her family and friends, from the disciples and the family of God.

What prompted her lavish act of devotion and love? What were the promptings in her life to even buy such a luxurious gift? What did she think she was going to do with it? How did she earn the money – a year's worth of labor? Who buys such luxury just to have it sitting around?

These might be similar questions to the decisions that we make in our own life. "Why would you have done that?" "Why would you have chosen that?" "What were you thinking?" Like Mary, we may not have been able to answer the questions because so many things in our life that are God-prompted have no rationale for us today.

There she was. There was Jesus. This wasn't the first time that He had been with them. What prompted her now to do this act of devotion? (There are always more questions in life than there are answers.) But here is a question that might have an answer. Why are you in Montessori? The ultimate answer always is God but what were the intermediate steps that brought you to your environment?

Your Montessori life is an elaborate (often costly) series of decisions – things you could have done; places you could have gone; things you could have been, but your choice was to put your life in a Montessori environment. Many people do not understand your life's work. Why would you choose such a different (exotic?) way of teaching and living. You have to explain it over and over again and still many don't understand it.

As you enter this way of teaching (and living) you note that it requires much more of you. It is not just your mind that gets trained (and transformed) but to be a good Montessori teacher your whole life changes. Your heart, your soul, your emotions all begin a process of transformation. You do not remain as you were when you started. You cannot help but change to accomplish the "mission" to which you have been called. Montessori is no longer just about teaching but about helping children to become what God is calling them to be.

Like Mary, you pour out the perfume of your life. Day by day, you lavish your life on your children. The most valuable and costly thing you have – your life – you give and give and give. Your heavenly Father sees the pouring out of your life as a sweet perfume – and that perfume of love fills the house of your children. Mary's perfume prepared Jesus for His death; your perfume prepares your children for life.

"And the perfume filled the house."