

The Foot Washer



"The foot washer"—Hyatt Moore

Artist's Statement: "The foot washer, another Mary, poured out her perfume and washed the Lord's feet with her hair. In my painting she has plenty of hair and is happy to be putting it to good use."

Imagine you are watching the scene unfold as you prayerfully read the Scripture (John 12:1-11).

Experience the details.

Try to move beyond typical evaluation questions ("Do I like this painting?" or "Is it good?") and instead ask:

"What catches my attention?
What thoughts, emotions, or memories are stirred in me?
What attracts? What repels? Why?"

Seek to look through and beyond the art to the truth it illumines.

What invitations do you discern?
How will you respond?



REPENTANCE and ADORATION

Repentance is a turning away from the old to embrace the new.

It is a putting to death the things in our lives that hurt us so that we can experience the life Christ offers to the fullest. The season of Lent is an intentional call to deep repentance, a yearly check-up regarding our spiritual health. Lent affords us the opportunity to take a serious and sober look at ourselves. Repentance is a path to real joy.

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus by calling people to repent. Today, repentance continues to prepare *us* to receive Jesus. Acknowledging our need for God's grace plays an essential role in our spiritual formation.

It is common for us to think that a call to repentance is a call to obsess on ourselves and all of our bad habits, addictions, shortcomings and failures. And we don't see the point. We make resolutions and promises to the Lord but toward what end?

There are very real temptations lurking in the shadows. We can become deceitful (giving people the impression that we have grown beyond our failures when we haven't), arrogant (proud that we have won the victory and are now stronger Christians, and better Christians, than those who haven't), or lazy (thinking repentance isn't important for modern people). We can also become too self-focused.

Instead, repentance should begin with honest, self-reflection about the sins that we do see, without making excuses. And we should acknowledge how we've missed the mark to our Savior and sincerely pray, expressing our desire to be changed and do better tomorrow. Self-reflection should lead to true repentance and true repentance should lead to a life-changing encounter with the living God—an encounter that empowers us through the work of the Holy Spirit to leave the old behind and become lost in adoration and worship of our Father who loves us even still. Repentance begins with self-reflection but it doesn't stay focused on ourselves; it lifts our eyes to Jesus.

Scripture Passages: Luke 3:1-20, Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-44, John 12:1-11

Reflect on how Mary would describe what it means to repent? Would Martha agree?

Mary understood something about *Worship* and *Adoration* that the men closest to Jesus didn't understand? What did she understand? Why was she so attuned and they missed it?

What do you want to learn from Mary?

