

SUNDAY 15 February 2026 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am - HC 2.5 and Baptism

Introduction

Hymn TIS 160 - Father all loving and ruling in majesty

Father all-loving and ruling in majesty
Judgement is yours and condemns all our pride
Stir up our rulers and peoples to penitence
Sorrow for sins that for vengeance have cried

Blessed Lord Jesus born humbly in poverty
Sharing a stable with beasts at your birth
Stir us to work for your justice and charity
Truly to care for the poor upon earth

Come Holy Spirit create in us holiness
Lift up our lives to your standard of right
Stir every will to new ventures of faithfulness
Flood the whole church with your glorious light

Holiest Trinity perfect in unity
Bind in your love every nation and race
May we adore you for time and eternity
Father Redeemer and Spirit of grace

Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **And also with you.**

Sentence of the day

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 12:3

Baptism Introduction

This morning we welcome Niamh and her sponsors, for Niamh's baptism.

There is one Body and one Spirit; **there is one hope in God's call to us.**

One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, **one God and Father of all.**

Baptism is the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he had risen from the dead, he commanded his followers to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We have come together today to obey that command.

Baptism with water signifies the cleansing from sin that Jesus' death makes possible, and the new life that God gives us through the Holy Spirit. In baptism, the promises of God are visibly signed and sealed for us. We are joined to Christ, and made members of his body, the Church universal.

Children are baptised in response to God's all-embracing love. Parents and godparents who have responded to that love come now to bring their children for baptism. Before

this congregation they must express their own trust and commitment to the promises of God, and their intention to bring up their children in the faith and practice of the Church. In due time these children should make their own response to God, and be prepared for confirmation.

In confirmation those who have been previously baptised come to confirm their baptismal promises and join with the other candidates to receive the laying on of the bishop's hand with prayer. We pray that those who are baptised and confirmed will be empowered by the Holy Spirit for the ministry and service to which God shall call them. So we welcome you, Niamh, with your sponsors. We give thanks for you, and pray that you may know God's love and faithfulness for ever.

Now, let us affirm our trust in God's mercy, and confess our need of forgiveness.

Lord God, you created this world, and made us in your own image. Forgive us when we turn away from you.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy**

Lord God, through your Son you overcame evil and death. Rescue us from slavery to sin. Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord God, by your Spirit, you restore us to fellowship with you and with one another. Breathe your love and freedom into our lives.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and keep you in life eternal.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Let your merciful ears O Lord, be open to the prayers of your humble servants and that they may obtain their petitions. Make them to ask such things that please you, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be glory and honour for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Ministry of the Word

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

⁷ If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. ⁸ Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need. ⁹ Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: "The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near," so that you do not show ill will toward the needy among your fellow Israelites and give them nothing. They may then appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. ¹⁰ Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. ¹¹ There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Psalms 136:1-9, 23-26

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. **His love endures forever.**

² Give thanks to the God of gods. **His love endures forever.**

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords: **His love endures forever.**
⁴ to him who alone does great wonders, **His love endures forever.**
⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens, **His love endures forever.**
⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters, **His love endures forever.**
⁷ who made the great lights — **His love endures forever.**
⁸ the sun to govern the day, **His love endures forever.**
⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night; **His love endures forever.**
²³ He remembered us in our low estate **His love endures forever.**
²⁴ and freed us from our enemies. **His love endures forever.**
²⁵ He gives food to every creature. **His love endures forever.**
²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven. **His love endures forever.**

1 Corinthians 13:8-13

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, chapter 11 beginning at verse 45 Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.”

⁴⁹ Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.”

⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. ⁵³ So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

⁵⁴ Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples. ⁵⁵ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. ⁵⁶ They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, “What do you think? Isn’t he coming to the festival at all?” ⁵⁷ But the chief

priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. ³ 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.

⁴ But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."

⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

⁷ "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. ⁸ You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

⁹ Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, ¹¹ for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

This is the gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - How much do you love Jesus?

[Sue] The Presentation

We welcome Niamh who comes to be baptised.

I invite her sponsors, to present her now.

[Sponsors] We present Niamh to be baptised.

Will you accept the responsibilities placed upon you in bringing Niamh for baptism?

[Sponsors] I will.

Are you willing to answer on behalf of Niamh?

[Sponsors] I am.

By your own prayers and example, by your friendship and love, will you encourage Niamh in the life and faith of the Christian community?

[Sponsors] I will, with God's help.

The Decision

Before God and this congregation, you must affirm that you turn to Christ and reject all that is evil: Do you turn to Christ?

[Sponsors] I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

[Sponsors] I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living, and all that is false and unjust?

[Sponsors] I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil?

[Sponsors] I renounce all that is evil.

Almighty God, deliver you from the powers of darkness, and lead you in the light of Christ to his everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

Will you each, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of Christ, loving God with your whole heart, and your neighbour as yourself, until your life's end?

[Sponsors] I will, with God's help.

You have heard Niamh's sponsors respond to Christ on behalf of Niamh.

Will you support them in this calling?

[Congregation] We will.

Let us pray

Grant, merciful God, that Niamh may be so buried with Christ in baptism that the new nature may be raised up in him. May the fruit of your Spirit grow and flourish in her.

Amen.

Give to Niamh's sponsors the desire to share with him what you have revealed in your holy gospel. **Amen.**

May she know Christ's forgiving love and continue in the fellowship and service of his Church. May she proclaim, by word and example, the good news of God in Christ. **Amen.**

We thank you for the ministry we have in your world and to each other in the household of faith. Hasten that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in Christ.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks that at the beginning of creation your Holy Spirit moved upon the waters to bring forth light and life. With water you cleanse and replenish the earth; you nourish and sustain all living things.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks that through the waters of the Red Sea you led your people out of slavery into freedom, and brought them through the river Jordan to new life in the land of promise.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks for your Son Jesus Christ: for his baptism by John, for his anointing with the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks that through the deep waters of death Jesus delivered us from our sins and was raised to new life in triumph.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks for the grace of the Holy Spirit who forms us in the likeness of Christ and leads us to proclaim your kingdom.

Thanks be to God.

And now we give you thanks that you have called Niamh to new birth in your Church through the waters of baptism. Pour out your Holy Spirit in blessing and sanctify this water so that those who are baptised in it may be made one with Christ in his death and

resurrection. May they die to sin, rise to newness of life, and continue forever in Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we give you praise and honour in the unity of the Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Affirmation of Faith

I ask everyone here who has faith in Christ to now to affirm as yours the faith of the Church.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in God the Son?

I believe Jesus Christ, God's only Son, Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

This is the faith of the Church

This is our faith: We believe in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Baptism

Niamh, I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Niamh, I sign you with the sign of the cross to show that you are marked as Christ's own forever. Live as a disciple of Christ: fight the good fight, finish the race, keep the faith.

Confess Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, look for his coming in glory.

God has brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father. [Present baptismal candle]

God has called you into his Church.

We therefore receive and welcome you as a member with us of the body of Christ, as a child of the one heavenly Father, and as an inheritor of the kingdom of God.

In baptism, God has made us one in Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

[Martin] Intercessions

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Gracious God, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

We are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. 1 John 3:2-3

Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Confession

Knowing the goodness of God and our failure to respond with love and obedience, let us confess our sins, saying together:

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn TIS 516 - Here Gracious Lord we see you face to face

Here, gracious Lord, we see you face to face;
here would we touch and handle things unseen,
here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
and for sustaining strength upon you lean.

Here would we feed upon the bread of God,
here drink with you the royal wine of heaven;
here would we lay aside each earthly load,
here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

We need no help but yours, nor do we need
another arm save yours to lean upon;
it is enough, O Lord, enough indeed;
our strength is in your might, your might alone.

Ours is the sin, but yours the righteousness;
ours is the guilt, but yours the cleansing blood;
here are our robe, our refuge and our peace

your blood, your righteousness, O Lord our God.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,
yet, passing, points to that glad feast above,
giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
the Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love.

Prayer for Offertory

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us
to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as
one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to
love and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each
other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and
praise you, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your
glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as
Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread
and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in
remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and
said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance
of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us.
Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice

and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord.

After Communion

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. **Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.**

Hymn TIS 153 - God is love, let heaven adore him

God is love, let heaven adore Him, God is love, let earth rejoice
Let creation sing before Him, And exalt Him with one voice
He who laid the earth's foundation, He who spread the heavens above
He who breathes through all creation, He is love eternal love

God is love, and gently enfolding all the world in one embrace,
with unfailing grasp is holding every child of every race.
And when human hearts are breaking under sorrow's iron rod,
then they find that selfsame aching deep within the heart of God.

God is love, and, though with blindness sin afflicts our human hearts,
God's eternal lovingkindness holding, guiding, grace imparts.
Sin and death and hell shall never o'er us final triumph gain;
God is love, so love for ever o'er the universe must reign.

Notices

Dismissal

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; give honour to all; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

[Sue] Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Cooma Anglican 15 February 2026 Sermon - How much do you love Jesus?
John 11:45-12:11, Deuteronomy 15:7-11, Psalm Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26,
1 Corinthians 13:8-13**

My grandson has a picture book in which the protagonists, big nut brown hare and little nut brown hare amiably complete to quantify how much they love each other. Little nut brown hare starts by saying that he loves big nut brown hare as wide as his little arms can reach, and it progresses to big nut brown hare saying that she loves little nut brown hare to the moon and back.

We all know we can't quantify how much we love someone, but sometimes how you act does quantify your love.

You may have seen in the news the American news presenter whose mother has been kidnapped. She has said that whatever ransom the kidnappers ask will be paid. There is no doubt that she and her family love her mother, and I know she is trying to say her love for her mother is greater than any monetary figure the kidnappers might ask, but I wonder if there is an amount they just cannot pay?

In our gospel reading today we see another situation. Essentially we see groups of people who by their actions are actually quantifying their love for Jesus. We see it both positively and negatively, showing how much they love, or hate Jesus, but ultimately setting the stage for the most ultimate demonstration of love that is absolutely possible, a love not limited by human weaknesses, but showing the perfect love of God for his creation while taking the absolute agony of judgement for the whole world's sin.

First as we read, we see the Jewish council, the San Hedrin, quantifying their love, or actually their hate of Jesus. They were rightly concerned that the Romans would come and take away both their temple and their nation if Jesus caused an insurrection. They were concerned that divisions caused by people following Jesus could lead to a revolt that would give the Romans the excuse to crush them without mercy, and their equation was simple: it is better that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.

Of course, they were wrong on so many levels. The destruction of the temple proved not to be linked to Jesus, but their approach was completely morally bankrupt, it demonstrated absolutely no faith in the God they claimed to serve and worship.

However, looking at it in another way, there was actually some form of validity in their logic. While they thought that the death of one man was a small price to pay for the security of God's people Israel, the reality was that in God's eyes, the death of his son was the right price to pay for his his people - although God's people included a lot more than just the nation of Israel. The price was not just a small price, the death of the perfectly sinless God the Son is actually the highest price that can possibly be paid, and God was not only prepared to pay it, he had planned to pay it since the beginning of time. So, the San Hedrin was so wrong, and yet ironically right.

As we read on in the passage, we see a different quantification of love for Jesus, different quantities that reflect people's love for Jesus, even if they weren't aware this is what they were doing. We read:

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 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.

If we were to read ahead in John's gospel, we would realize that the Passover in six days would be when Jesus was crucified, so his coming death was front and centre of his mind at this point, and in fact the events of this day were preparation for it, events that unassailably fixed Jesus's future on the cross with no possibility of any other direction.

We read last week that Jesus has just raised Lazarus from death, and so it is not surprising that in today's reading the town of Bethany throws a special celebratory meal in Jesus' honour: honouring the one who had raised their friend Lazarus from the dead. Martha, ever the practical one, served this meal. This was the way Martha and the rest of the town demonstrated their love for Jesus, but then things take a step further. Mary takes a pint (600 mills in metric measurement) of pure nard and washes Jesus's feet. What you need to realise is that this nard was worth a year's wage. In today's terms, that is over \$100 thousand dollars (at least, that is the average wage in Australia today). Whatever the value, it was an incredibly expensive foot washing. There is no doubt she knew exactly what she was doing, and it was a true reflection of the love she had for Jesus. Wiping his feet with her hair just further emphasised the inexpressible value of her love for him. It was not worth just a year's wages, but she was really saying Jesus, cleanness and sweetness befit you and your purity and holiness and power and grace. But as for me, I'm nothing. My hair is the most beautiful and the most clean thing I have. But if it could serve to magnify your purity and your sweetness, it would be my honour to turn it into a rag for your feet.

Yet, there is someone who callously questions the value of Mary's love for Jesus. Judas steps up and says "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? He knows that it was worth a year's wages. The gospel writer John knows exactly what Judas was saying and he tells it straight. He says Judas did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to it.

Also, If we read ahead, we would see an explicit quantification of the difference between Mary's and Judas's love for Jesus. Mary washed Jesus's feet with one hundred thousand dollars of pure nard, and dried them with her hair, but Judas would sell Jesus's life for 30 pieces of silver - somewhere around \$300 in today's terms. Sure, as we read the gospels, we see how close Judas and Jesus appear to be, but this really demonstrates that they weren't

that close. If Mary loved Jesus a year's wage, Judas loved Jesus a few hours wage at most.

Jesus then steps up to defend Mary from this totally insensitive attack by Judas. He says: "Leave her alone, It was intended that she should save it for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.

Leave her alone - he says. Back off! Jesus wanted Mary to keep her expression of her love for him going to his death; not the actual perfume but what it symbolised, her love. He didn't want Judas's attack in any way to prevent her love for him continuing to even beyond his death.

Jesus says that it is vital that Mary demonstrate her love for him, her saviour, before she shared her love for the poor who will always be there. He particularly wanted her to demonstrate it while he is in the world, before he goes to the cross.

And so, today, we have seen different levels of love for Jesus. We have seen the San Hedrin who thought that the loss of one man was a small price for the salvation of a nation. We have seen Mary who demonstrated her love with a year's salary worth of perfume and enduring the dishonour of using her hair as a towel, and we see Judas, who not only callously disparages Mary's demonstration of her love, but later will demonstrate how little he values his friend's life: 30 pieces of silver, or just a few hours work.

As I mentioned earlier, these are preparing Jesus for the cross, which is ultimately Jesus' glorification. Throughout his gospel, John has been foretelling that Jesus could be glorified - most recently he said that Lazarus died so that he would be glorified. In just a few days, we will see Jesus glorified for the love of his people. His glory will be shown as he ultimately defeats sin and death so his people have eternal life. As Jesus had ministered on earth for some three years, as he was crucified taking but a few hours to die, and as he would lie dead in the tomb for three days, so he would demonstrate his glory in his love for his people by granting them never-ending life; eternal life in the completely undefiled love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in creation the way he created it to be.

Ultimately, love cannot be quantified in terms of money, or hours work or even national security, but if the devil ever seeks to interfere with the love you have for Jesus, like Jesus you need to tell him to back off! To leave you alone. The love you show will only ever be a pale reflection of the infinite, inexpressible love Jesus demonstrated for you. His love is much greater than any we could ever give, but you must never give up showing your love for him and for what he has done for you.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. Amen