

What a gift! What a privilege!

What a responsibility!

What a grace it is to be able to caress, embrace and care for the wounds of the wounded body of Jesus, the wounds of so many who have been crucified and beaten by history, by indifference, by corruption.

Like Him, while He was alive, to use our hands to heal. The relief of closeness, of the friendly, loving heart, the gentle caress, the strong embrace, that heart naked and stripped of everything and free to love.

Chosen and loved by God, that same God who today presents himself in this community (family, residence, house) thirsty for relief from his pain, for strength from his fear, for caresses from his loneliness.

**We listen: His Hands – Jenny Jordan**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= FySuVkiit0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FySuVkiit0)

you may also download:

<http://slamjetmedia.com/hishands/>

**Lectio Divina:**

1. What does the text say?

(read it again and meditate in a prayerful silence)

*(Accompany the lectura with an instrumental music).*

Bethany is for Jesus a place of friendship, warmth and companionship: exchanging the bread of affection as well as the bread at the table. Moments of sincerity, emotions expressed, complicity, pain and laughter on the surface.

The home is primarily a space of intimacy and reception, and when this space is lacking the interior life is weakened, the community, family disintegrate, relationships are fragmented. In the midst of the crisis, Jesus will return to the home of his friends. It is beautiful to see that in the scene there are no words, Martha and Mary wrap him up, they embrace him in silence, a silence that deepens and entails even more the value and beauty of his gestures. Jesus receives them with gratitude and lets himself be done.

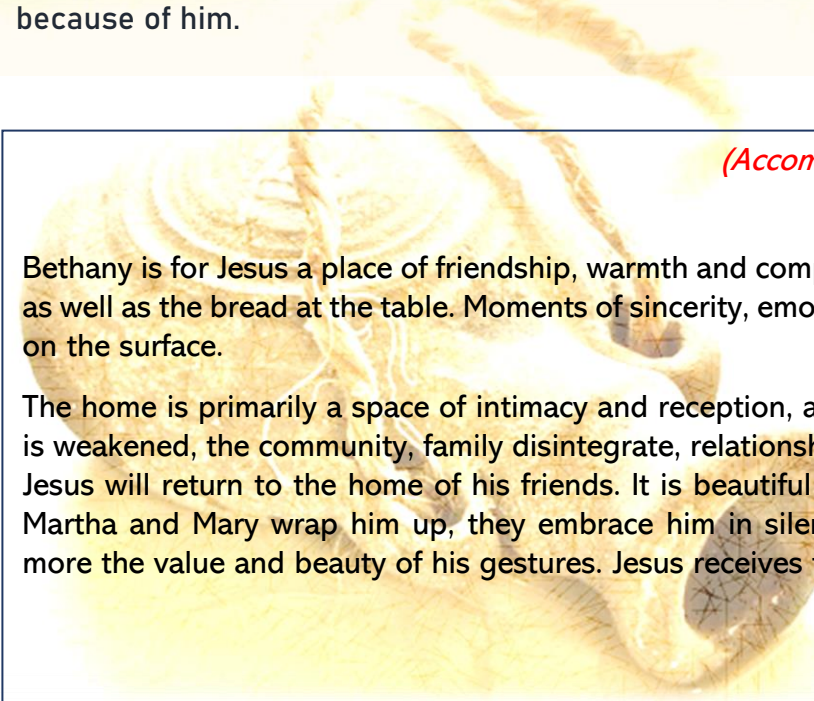
*Silence & instrumental*



**Gospel of St. John 12:1-11**

Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Then Judas the Iscariot, one of his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?" He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions. So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

The large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him.



Once again there are impure, crooked, envious, discontented looks that blur the scene, that reproach, suspect and attack. What is it about the heart of Judas that he cannot see the pain of Jesus and the love of friends who seek to alleviate the pain and agony? **How is it possible that his heart has become so small?**

Where there is gratuitousness and caress, there are always voices that disagree. We must count on them and face them as Jesus did, with kindness and lucidity, allowing Mary to continue caressing his feet and pouring on him the perfume that is so dear to him. He recognizes that he is in need, he knows how to put everything in its place and he values the gesture of affection and esteem that this woman offers him.

*Silence & instrumental music*

I found myself kneeling suddenly beside a little table, while Love, as if liberated, was flowing all over me; liberated from envy, from jealousy, from antipathies.

Etty Hillemun

Gestures of proximity that are incarnated. It is your bread and your caresses, very concrete, the ones Jesus expects while hidden in the faces of those less loved and more suffering, not the ones we always have next to us, but the ones neglected and forgotten. It is about caressing someone, feeding them, kissing their face, healing their hands. In our relationship with broken bodies, will our measure be generous and abundant?

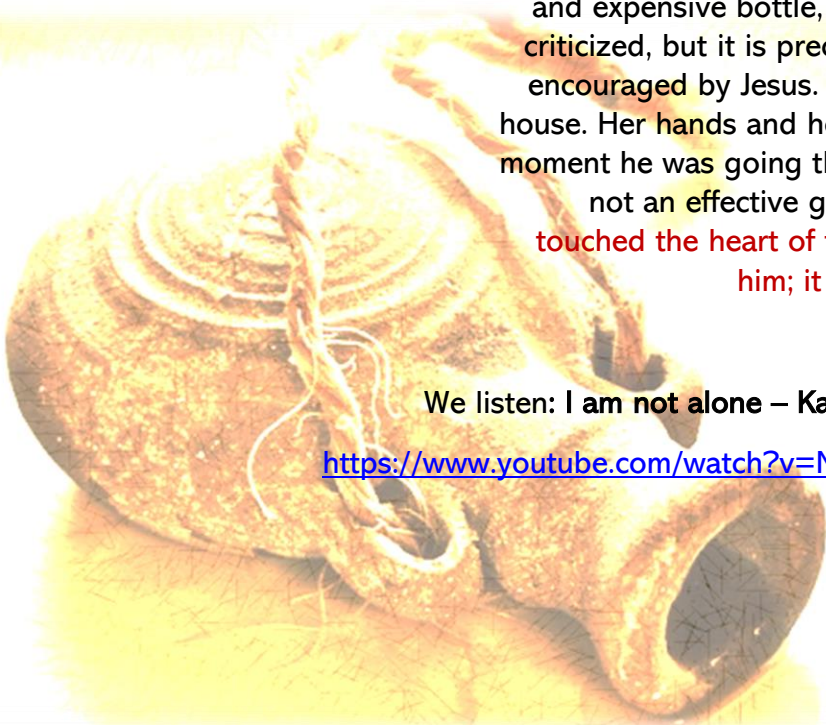
**May our only fear be not having loved enough.**

*Silence & instrumental music*

The perfume poured on healthy skin is beauty and celebration, preparation for embrace and intimacy. Perfume poured on wounded skin is ointment and balm that soothes. Nothing of the tenderness we offer will be lost, for the perfume remains in the hands of the one who gives it. When Mary breaks her precious and expensive bottle, she exposes herself, her caresses and is criticized, but it is precisely this contact that is recognized and encouraged by Jesus. The fragrance of love invaded the whole house. Her hands and her perfume comforted him in the difficult moment he was going through, they made him feel loved. It was not an effective gesture, it did not resolve anything, **but it touched the heart of the friend in his vulnerability, it dignified him; it endowed him with beauty and meaning.**

We listen: I am not alone – Kari Jobe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbbCGqK6uNc>



Sometimes when we see faces that have lost light, bodies that become tough, people that become rigid with themselves and with others. We should ask ourselves: **Who embraces them in a healing way? When was the last time someone touched them? Who makes them feel how valuable and loved they are?**

"Friendship flows in between strength and fragility. It makes you discover your own fragility, it makes you accept that you are vulnerable but also that you can count on the strength of your friend. The friend is a friend because he touches you, disarmed and sincere. There where you can let yourself be touched by the other and touch him, there you can say that you are yourself having dropped all the masks" (E. Ronchi).

### *Lectio Divina*

2- What does it say to you?  
What does it say to your  
community/family?

Who do you need to embrace in  
a healing way? Who do you  
need to let yourself be  
embraced by?

3- What do you respond? What  
do you commit to?

**WE SHARE IN  
FAMILY/COMMUNITY**

**We finish with the song:**

**You are loved – Josh Groban**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGLSk3AVcUU>

### **PRAYING SIGN:**

Certainly for the COVID-19 we do not make use of hugs or touch or physical contact, but let that not be an impediment to embrace from our heart those "Jesuses" who are there waiting for me, silent, needy, wounded, defeated.

Think about all the "Mary"-s and "Judas"-es in your life, in your community/family, in your surrounding, in the Church and that today God presents to you so that you may embrace and allow to be embraced.

Embrace every "Judas" that God presents to you, embrace them from prayer very strongly, give them a sincere, reconciling, real, deep embrace. And ask God to heal you, to free you, to restore you.

Embrace every "Mary" that God gives you and let yourself be embraced by them. Give thank, bless them.

TO DELVE DEEPER INTO THE  
THEME, A SUGGESTION OF  
FILM TO SHARE IN FAMILY  
OR COMMUNITY:

**THE SHACK:**

<http://www.cinemafive12.com/watch/1900/the-shack-2017/>