

Thought for the day 19th June 2020 from Gill Griggs (St Chad's)

Reading: Joshua 24:1-28; Mark 14:3-9

Are you glad that the shops are beginning to open again? Perhaps, like me, you have an important birthday to mark and to buy for. Will the possible gift be thought of as extravagant, or by others as not sufficiently out of the ordinary, too 'run of the mill'.

Think of the story in which Jesus commends an extravagant act of love. While dining with friends, a woman anointed Him with very expensive perfumed ointment, which could have been sold for a great deal of money and the proceeds given to the poor.

The word 'extravagance' comes from two Latin words - meaning 'to wander beyond the limits of the normal or expected'. It also takes on expressions like 'unnecessary waste or excess'. But Jesus realised that there will always be poverty and the opportunity to try and deal with it. What the woman had done was unique and was an offering to somebody she gratefully admired.

It may be that in the last few weeks the Thursday evening clapping has been a sort of offering to all those in the NHS who have risked becoming ill themselves, as they cared for the sick. Included in their number should be all those who have retired from such work, but who volunteered to come back to respond to the needs of others, even at personal risk...

What can we do? Let me tell you the true story of a church that was raising money for a new building. Everyone was asked to give what they could. One small boy was very upset that he had nothing to give. 'My father is sick and cannot work, and I am not given any pocket money.' He was told not to worry but he still did. On the following Sunday he brought a spinning top and 5 marbles. 'It is all I've got' he said. His Sunday School teacher was so impressed that she added a larger sum herself; and the Minister did the same. The marbles are still on display in the church.

We can all do something.