Sermon:   
**Mary took ½ litre of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard & poured it on Jesus’ feet.** (Jn 12.3)

What could you buy for $48000? Car, furniture for a house, crib in Glenavy!

1 denarii = 1 day’s wage. If $20 per hour, and 8 hours = $160. Thus 300 denarii = $48000. TEXT.

Similar story is found in Matthew and Mark (in the house of Simon the Leper, poured on Jesus’ head)

In both the woman is not named. The complainers in Mt were disciples, in Mk ‘some people’.

Luke 7.36-50 also records an earlier story with dinner at Simon *the Pharisee’s* house. So some confusion.

[1] Clearly Mary loved Jesus, in a non-sexual way, and expressed it in the best way she knew. TEXT.

Nard was used in burials – was this for her own? Was it her dowry?

How much do we spend on similar acts of generosity for those we love?   
Our son Aidan has just announced his engagement in UK, expensive for us to go, pay part of costs, etc. Typical cost in NZ is $35000. Hopefully not $48000! But we do not begrudge it.

[2] Jesus knew he would die soon, and also saw this act of generosity as anointing before burial. NB v7 suggests that she only used part of the perfume, but having broken the seal maybe it had all to be used soon – it was just one week later.

[3] Judas typical of the kind of person who sees the cost of everything but the value of nothing. His comment about selling & giving to the poor is silly. The rich person, who could buy the perfume, should give *his* money to the poor! The whole point of perfume, having been made, is to be used.

Jesus is not saying that the poor do not matter, but that there will always be a time to care for the poor; there will not be another time to care for him.

The story is about seizing our opportunities. Mary *sees* the moment & *seizes* the moment. Do we do either? And when we do so do we act wholeheartedly and extravagantly? TEXT is encouragement to act like Mary towards others, made in the image of God; what we do for the least we do for Christ.