

Lent Wednesday 4A (3/25/20)  
**Entering the Passion of Jesus**  
Chapter 4: The First Dinner: Risking Rejection  
Mark 14:3-9

*"Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."*

My grandmother was one of those faithful women who risks being forgotten. Raised in poverty during the Great Depression, driven from the Midwest by hardship, widowed at a young age with three boys to raise by herself, ruined by a predatory financial scheme, and dependent on her eldest son's family for the remainder of her life, grandma nevertheless clung quietly to her faith. I once found a small stack of note cards in her Bible scribbled with the same series of verses. This must have been her little effort at evangelism, to distribute these beloved verses should the opportunity arise. And, there at the top of the list was Psalm 91: "You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God in whom I trust.'"

When she died, there wasn't much by which to remember her – some knitted treasures and other crafts, and those note cards, remnants of a life worn by adversity yet rooted in God's promises.

It's ironic that the woman whom Jesus commends for anointing him at the first supper in Holy Week is unnamed (in Mark). "What she has done will be told in remembrance of her," he says, still neither scripture nor history recalls her name. Amy-Jill Levine remarks, "This is an opening for us to talk not only about this one unnamed woman, but about all those women in the Gospels whose stories are not remembered and not told."<sup>1</sup> Women are among the patrons of Jesus' movement; women are the majority of his followers who are present at the crucifixion; a woman is the first to whom the risen Christ reveals himself, and the first to deliver the Easter news (in John). Women remain at center stage throughout the gospel story; why should they have faded into the background?

Even as we lift up the faithful women of scripture, I wonder if we might also lift up those faithful women we've known more recently, and the ones we've known personally. Who are the ancestors, the mothers and mother figures, the mentors and friends who have shaped our faith by their testimony and commitments? How might we remember them in light of the good news that we proclaim?

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<sup>1</sup> 96.