

**Daily Office Devotional, Thursday, October 8, 2020**  
**Proper 22, the week of the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Today we observe the Feast of William D P Bliss and Richard T. Ely. (See below.)

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 131, 132, [133]; PM Psalm 134, 135

Micah 3:1-8; Acts 24:1-23; Luke 7:36-50

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer

Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer

Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Gospel, Luke 7:36-50

36 One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. 37 And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. 38 She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner.' 40 Jesus spoke up and said to him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' 'Teacher,' he replied, 'Speak.' 41 A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?' 43 Simon answered, 'I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt.' And Jesus said to him, 'You have judged rightly.' 44 Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. 45 You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.' 48 Then he said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven.' 49 But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?' 50 And he said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'

## David's Reflections

James Hillman an analytical psychologist presented the essence of Karl Jung's psychology to clergy in four lectures that were subsequently published. On the subject of confession of sin, he said, "The aim of confession is lustration; what is washed away is gone, carried off by the river to a far sea." \*

The woman Jesus forgave in this text obviously had experienced lustration. Her past had been washed away in the stream of Jesus' love and forgiveness. Jesus' remark in verse 47 that her sins had been forgiven probably refers to a previous encounter. She had experienced forgiveness prior to this banquet scene; now the overflow of devotion and gratitude showed itself in her poignant acts of love.

Simon's judgmental, harsh spirit flowed from a very different font. The lustration in which this woman reveled he did not share. He indeed loved little, a stark symptom of how little forgiveness he had experienced.

Our church offers the sacrament of reconciliation, a rite in which one confesses their sins to God in the presence of a priest. (A layperson also can hear your confession, but there are limits to the layperson's ability to respond and the confidentiality is not legally inviolate, as is the case with a priest.)

This woman experienced the incredible affirmation of Jesus' unconditional love, a love undaunted by what she revealed about herself in becoming vulnerable with Jesus and the audience. In the sacrament of reconciliation, the confessor experiences God's love and forgiveness becoming tangible through the rite itself and through the loving presence of the person hearing the confession. God's love and forgiveness reach through the rite and the presence of the person receiving your confession.

Those words from Hillman reach out to me. Could it be that our past truly can be washed away? Jesus lived, died, and rose to make that possible. Faith in him ushers us into a lifetime of ongoing forgiveness and a new future unhinged from the past. New futures get birthed each day and each Sunday in the celebration of Holy Eucharist.

"The aim of confession is lustration; what is washed away is gone, carried off by the river to a far sea." \*

\* *Insearch: Psychology and Religion* (New York: Scribner's, 1969), p. 24.

*Collect of the Day: Proper 22, the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 234)

Today we observe the Feast of William D P Bliss, priest (died 8 Oct 1926 and Richard T. Ely, economist (died 4 Oct 1943).

<http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/bliss&ely.htm>

*Collect of the feast of William D P Bliss and Richard T. Ely*

Blessed God, whose Son Jesus came as servant to all: We thank you for William Bliss and Richard Ely, whose dedication to the commonweal through economic justice led them to be bold reformers of the world and the Church; and we pray that we, with them, may find our true happiness through self-sacrifice in service of your reign, where all the hungry are fed and the downtrodden are raised up through Jesus Christ our Liberator; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Protection*

O God, the life of all who live, the light of the faithful, the strength of those who labor, and the repose of the dead: We thank you for the blessings of the day that is past, and humbly ask for your protection through the coming night. Bring us in safety to the morning hours; through him who died and rose again for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.* (BCP, 124)

*For the Parish*

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 817)

*A Prayer for Light*

O Lord God Almighty, as you have taught us to call the evening, the morning, and the noonday one day; and have made the sun to know its going down: Dispel the

darkness of our hearts, that by your brightness we may know you to be the true God and eternal light, living and reigning for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 110)

*If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion. —Hildegard of Bingen*

God of melting glaciers, God of disappearing rainforests:  
You entrust us with the care of creation but for too long the natural world has suffered from the effects of human ignorance, apathy, and exploitation. Just as we have awakened to the harm we have done to our world, help our eyes be open to the ways we can participate in its healing, living into our call to be caretakers who fall deeper in love with creation each day. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Mission*

Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ; let your Gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 280)