

# Matters of the Heart

Orthodox reflections on faith and life



## 40 Sweet Aroma of Repentance

During a feast in honour of Christ at the house of Simon the Pharisee, we get a portrayal of true repentance. For as we are told, a sinful woman enters the house, falls to her knees in expression of her penance, and begins to anoint the feet of the Lord with the tears and an expensive fragrance, and wiping them with the hair of her head. What a sight to behold!

As the Pharisee and his honourable guests stood back and condemned, the woman was at work glorifying her Lord. They saw a sinful woman, she saw a Saviour. They spoke rebuke, she repented in silence. They belittled their Guest, she honoured Son of God. They increased in iniquity; she was forgiven of her sins.

Let the sweetness of our repentance likewise appease God, by kneeling humbly at the feet of the Lord, showing contrition through an abundance of tears, and anointing the Messiah by acts of faithfulness.

✦ ‘...when she knew that  
✦ Jesus sat at the table in  
✦ the Pharisee’s house,  
✦ brought an alabaster  
✦ flask of fragrant oil, and  
✦ stood at His feet behind  
✦ Him weeping; and she  
✦ began to wash His feet  
✦ with her tears, and wiped  
✦ them with the hair of her  
✦ head...’

Luke 7:37-38

✦ *Have mercy upon me O*  
✦ *Lord and forgive my*  
✦ *multitude of sins for I*  
✦ *have none other but*  
✦ *You.*