



# The Two Debtors

Jesus ate and drank with ordinary people who accepted His friendship and discipleship. The Bible contains many stories of Jesus gathering them around the table to teach them about the Kingdom of God. But some people did not like that He shared meals with those they regarded as cheaters and sinners.



Jesus was once invited to the home of Simon, a pious and prosperous religious leader, who followed the laws of Moses strictly. As they settled down and were about to be served a meal, a woman known for her evil deeds rushed inside and fell at the feet of Jesus.

Simon's face turned pale as he watched the woman wash Jesus' feet with her tears, apply an expensive perfume, and wipe them dry with her hair. The pious man did not like that a sinner was touching the feet of his teacher.

Jesus noticed this and shared the story of two debtors, who were unable to pay back the money they owed to a money lender. One of them had taken a small loan while the other had borrowed a huge sum, but the money lender wrote off both the debts. Jesus asked Simon who among them would be more grateful to the money lender. Simon said that it would be the one who owed the huge sum.

Jesus wanted to explain that although the woman was a sinner, she was sorry about her behavior and was seeking forgiveness from God.

Those gathered at Simon's home understood that by merely following the religious laws and rituals, they do not become pious. We too must repent for our evil actions, and also forgive others to experience divine salvation and liberation.

## Insight



Fr. Matthew Lederle (1926- 1986), a Pune-based German Jesuit priest, popularised inculturation in the Indian church, by introducing local culture, traditions and art in Christianity. He encouraged paintings on Christian themes with typical Indian symbols. For example, a Christmas card depicting Mother Mary dressed in a saree, holding baby Jesus in the backdrop of an Indian village. Fr. Lederle was also an advocate of inter-religious dialogue.



## Word of God

Luke 7: 47 – 50

"I tell you, then, the great love she has shown proves that her many sins have been forgiven. But whoever has been forgiven little shows only a little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "your sins are forgiven." The others sitting at the table began to say to themselves, "who is this, who even forgives sins?" But Jesus said to the woman, "your faith has saved you, go in peace."

