

FEBRUARY 11, 2026 FATHER ROSHAN LOY D’SOUZA

: A number of years ago, there was a man who traveled a very long distance just to meet a holy monk who lived in silence on a mountain. When he finally arrived, tired and dusty, he asked the monk, “What is the secret of holiness?” The monk did not answer immediately. Instead, he poured the man a cup of tea. He kept pouring even when the cup was full, until tea spilled everywhere. The man cried out, “Stop! The cup is already full!” The monk gently replied, “So too is your heart. Unless it is emptied, nothing new can enter.”

This short story helps us understand today’s readings.

In the first reading from the First Book of Kings, we hear about the Queen of Sheba. She travels a great distance to meet King Solomon because she has heard of his wisdom. She comes not with a closed heart, but with questions, curiosity, and humility. When she encounters Solomon, she is overwhelmed—not only by his wisdom, but by the order, peace, and blessing that flow from a heart, centered on God. She praises the Lord, recognizing that true wisdom comes from God alone. Her journey shows us that a sincere search for truth, when guided by humility, always leads us closer to God.

In the Gospel, however, Jesus warns us of something very different. He tells the crowd that defilement does not come from what enters the body, but from what comes out of the heart. Jesus names the things that poison us from within: evil thoughts, pride, jealousy, greed, deceit, and arrogance. These things do not come from the outside world; they grow when the heart is cluttered and closed to God. Like the overflowing cup in the story, a heart filled with sin leaves no room for grace.

Here we see a powerful contrast. The Queen of Sheba approaches Solomon with an open heart, ready to receive wisdom.

The people Jesus addresses are being warned about hearts that are hardened, distracted, and self-centered. One posture leads to blessing and wonder; the other leads to spiritual blindness.

Today, the Church also celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, which brings these readings even more deeply to life. In Lourdes, Mary appeared not to a queen or a scholar, but to a poor, uneducated young girl, Saint Bernadette. Bernadette's heart was simple, humble, and open—like an empty cup ready to be filled. Through her, Mary reminded the world of repentance, prayer, and trust in God. From that place of simplicity flowed healing, conversion, and hope for millions of pilgrims who continue to visit Lourdes today.

Our lady of Lourdes teaches us that God does not work through pride or status, but through humility and purity of heart. Mary's message echoes the Gospel: if our hearts are clean, God's grace can flow freely. The miraculous healings at Lourdes are signs of something even deeper—the healing of the human heart when it turns back to God.

So today, we are invited to examine our own hearts. Are we more like the Queen of Sheba, seeking wisdom with openness and reverence? Or have we allowed resentment, selfishness, or pride to take root within us? Have we focused too much on outward appearances—religious rules, customs, or rituals—while neglecting inner conversion?

Our Lady of Lourdes points us gently but firmly toward her Son. She invites us to empty our hearts of whatever blocks God's grace and to trust in His mercy. When we do this, our lives, like Solomon's kingdom and the shrine at Lourdes, become places where others can encounter God.

May Mary, Our Lady of Lourdes, help us to keep our hearts humble, pure, and open—so that the wisdom of God may dwell within us and flow out into the world. Amen.