

- This is one of the more well-known episodes in the Gospels...this wonderful story of Martha & Mary...Martha fretting about many things, while Mary simply sits at the feet of Jesus and listens to His words and teaching...and simply enjoys His presence.
- Yes, Martha was fussing over the needs of hospitality; our first reading about Abraham and his visitors show the importance of that.
- But maybe Martha was worried a bit too much, and by doing so was missing the important.
- *“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things.”*...Jesus affectionately correcting her: “I know your heart, but your worry over earthly concerns is separating you from me.”
- Does that not sound like advice for somebody we know...like ourselves?
- School, work, sports, house, car, kids, doctors, health, relatives, marriage, etc., etc., etc.
- Certainly we can't simply ignore our daily lives and our responsibilities...but all things in priority and perspective, and always trusting in the goodness of God...and realize what is truly important.
- For, as Jesus says: *“There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”*
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- So...we must be wary of being so busy or preoccupied with the things of daily life that we forget what is truly important.

- This is easy to do...because the world values much of what is useless: the big car, the big house, prestige, honors, popularity, fame, etc.
- And yet...of what good will these things be as we stand before the throne of God? Indeed, they may be to our detriment if they detract from what is truly important: love of God and neighbor.
- This is something I, myself, often consider in my own examination of conscience. Do I have too much? Do I focus too much on my own comfort and pride—my “needs”—to the expense of others and to the absolute good of fidelity to God? What can I do to trim and give more to the poor as Christ has commanded us to do? Where can I give more attention to God...and sit more at Jesus’ feet rather than fret with the things of the world.
- I try to remember Paul’s admonition: “...*there is great gain in godliness with contentment...if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation...For the love of money is the root of all evils...*” (1Tim 6:6-10 RSV) And this goes not only for wealth, but for all things that take us away from God.
- In the book of Ecclesiastes, the author says that, for a time he denied himself no earthly pleasure whatever...and yet, in that life he found emptiness: “All is vanity”, he says.
- “...*the silver cord [of life] is snapped...and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it...Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.*” (Ecc 12:6-14 RSV)
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- And so: what is of greater importance— our very temporary earthly life, which last hardly past tomorrow...or our eternal life? The welfare of the body, or the welfare of the soul?
- And who is more concerned for the care of your soul: the Church, or the world at large?
- This is the very purpose of the Church: to lead to salvation through the teaching of Christ, and grace given in His sacraments.
- So...knowing these things—that the eternal is most important, and the Church leads us towards that eternal happiness by instructing us in the way of Christ—doesn't the logical, the wise, person seek to be holy in all things by following Christ and His Church, regardless of where emotions or “feelings” or the transient popular ideas of the day may try to lead us?

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- How do we bring that love and knowledge of God into our hearts?...embed it into our very being?
 - By sitting at the feet of Christ, like Mary in our Gospel...in prayer...through reading of the Gospels and scripture...by learning well the teaching of the Church.
 - To keep before us constantly what is truly right and good...easily forgotten in a world which often teaches the very opposite.
 - As Jesus said: *“If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”* (Joh 15:19 RSV)
 - When we Christians try to teach the world truth, we will often be rejected...but we proclaim Christ's truth anyway, in order to be faithful to Him, and, as Paul puts it: *“...to at least save some.”*
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- Yes, we tend to overload our days with activities and commitments--even good and beneficial ones, like Mary's sister Martha in our Gospel today—and we often lose sight of our real purpose in life: to know, love, and imitate Christ more each day.
- As the fathers at Vatican II states: “...*Man painfully searches for a better world, without working with equal zeal for the betterment of his own spirit.*” (Gaudium et Spes, 4)
- But only Christ can give real meaning to our lives...only He fills us with the peace and joy for which we so desperately long ...and only He leads us to everlasting life.

[Gn 18:1-10a](#)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the terebinth of Mamre,
as he sat in the entrance of his tent,
while the day was growing hot.
Looking up, Abraham saw three men standing nearby.
When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them;
and bowing to the ground, he said:
"Sir, if I may ask you this favor,
please do not go on past your servant.
Let some water be brought, that you may bathe your feet,
and then rest yourselves under the tree.
Now that you have come this close to your servant,
let me bring you a little food, that you may refresh yourselves;
and afterward you may go on your way."
The men replied, "Very well, do as you have said."

Abraham hastened into the tent and told Sarah,
"Quick, three measures of fine flour! Knead it and make rolls."
He ran to the herd, picked out a tender, choice steer,
and gave it to a servant, who quickly prepared it.
Then Abraham got some curds and milk,
as well as the steer that had been prepared,
and set these before the three men;
and he waited on them under the tree while they ate.

They asked Abraham, "Where is your wife Sarah?"
He replied, "There in the tent."
One of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year,
and Sarah will then have a son."

[Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 5](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (1a) He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

One who walks blamelessly and does justice;
who thinks the truth in his heart
and slanders not with his tongue.

R. He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who harms not his fellow man,
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;
by whom the reprobate is despised,
while he honors those who fear the LORD.

R. He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who lends not his money at usury
and accepts no bribe against the innocent.
One who does these things
shall never be disturbed.

R. He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

[Col 1:24-28](#)

Reading 2

Brothers and sisters:

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake,
and in my flesh I am filling up
what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ
on behalf of his body, which is the church,
of which I am a minister
in accordance with God's stewardship given to me
to bring to completion for you the word of God,
the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past.
But now it has been manifested to his holy ones,
to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory
of this mystery among the Gentiles;
it is Christ in you, the hope for glory.
It is he whom we proclaim,
admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom,
that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

[Lk 10:38-42](#)

Gospel

Jesus entered a village
where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him.
She had a sister named Mary
who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak.
Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said,
"Lord, do you not care
that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving?
Tell her to help me."
The Lord said to her in reply,
"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things.
There is need of only one thing.
Mary has chosen the better part
and it will not be taken from her."