

XVI Sunday C/Keep Your Eyes on Jesus

Introduction

In today's Gospel we have the beautiful story of Martha and Mary... Martha, busy hosting her beloved Jesus... Mary, quietly spending time with Jesus. What might we learn about ourselves from this story in the Gospel of Luke?

I Martha

Martha is the type A person... always busy. There's so much to do. So many of us have so much to do... people to see, places to go, things to do, multiple items to worry about. How many of us worry too much about too many things which are not really in our control?

In today's Gospel Martha was the worrier with so much to do.

Jesus was visiting, and she was intent on being the good hostess,
preparing the meal,
getting the meat and veggies ready,
checking on the wine,
setting the table...

So many things to do so that Jesus, her friend,
would be sure to recognize what a good hostess she was...

And she *was* a good hostess...

And where was Mary?

Why wasn't Mary helping her?

Didn't her sister realize there was so much to do?

Mary was wasting time with Jesus?

Couldn't she do that later?

After the meal?

Of course, she would have to first help clean up after the meal,
Wash and dry the dishes,
Put the leftovers away,
Clean the table,
Sweep the kitchen...

Then maybe there would be time to spend with Jesus... maybe?
But Martha would be pretty tired after her busy day –
After all, it's a lot of work being a hostess.

For Martha the story is not about her friend Jesus visiting.
For Martha the story is about Martha the perfect hostess.

But what about Jesus?
Martha missed the opportunity of spending time with her friend Jesus!
Well, maybe next visit!
Are we too busy each day to take time out for Jesus?

II Mary

Look at Mary in today's Gospel.
She's sits with Jesus,
spending time with him,
listening to him,
talking with him.

Ask yourself...

Do I spend any time with Jesus?
Who is Jesus to me?

How do you name Jesus?
Friend? Redeemer? Savior? Brother?...
How about *my* friend, *my* redeemer, *my* savior, *my* brother?

Do you ever tell Jesus that you love him?
Do you pray each day?

In the morning do you offer your day to Jesus and ask his help that day?
Did you make a morning offering today?
(Suggestion... when you get home get a 2 in. square piece of paper, write
MORNING OFFERING on it, scotch tape it to the mirror where you brush your
teeth every morning... then when you see it tomorrow – say, GOOD
MORNING JESUS... THANK YOU FOR THIS DAY, HELP ME THIS NEW DAY... or

use your own words. Do you ever forget to brush your teeth? Like Mary, in today's Gospel, spend some time with Jesus in the morning.)

Do you pray during the day or are you too busy?

When do you pray during the day?

What about meal prayers, at least thanking God for the gift of food and refreshment each day – or are we embarrassed that others might see us praying and think we're 'religious crazies'.

I remember when I was stationed in New York City I was visiting my friends Tony and Maureen and their kids. Before dinner Tony would say grace... a simple thank you and asking for God's blessing on the food and on the family. Imagine that, a father leading the family in prayer... Simple...

Some other aids in prayer...

Do you remember the Litanies? We sort of forgot about them years ago. I recently rediscovered them.

Litanies give us new ways of praying, new images, new words. Just Google Catholic Litany of the Sacred Heart, or of the Passion, or Mary... then take time to read thru the litany slowly, perhaps pausing at some image or description which touches you. Give it time to sink in. Spend time with Jesus.

Here are some other ways of thinking about Jesus... or looking at Jesus...

Jesus was bruised and brought healing...

Jesus was pierced and eased pain...

Jesus was dead and brought life...

Jesus *is* alive and brings new life...

Who is Jesus... To you? Remember...

Jesus will never leave you...

Jesus will never forsake you...

Jesus will never forget you...

Jesus will never mislead you...

Jesus will never overlook you...

When you fall, Jesus will lift you up...

When you fail, Jesus will forgive you...

When you are lost, Jesus is the way...

When you are in darkness, Jesus is the light...

When you are broken, Jesus will mend you...

When you face trials, Jesus will strengthen you...

When you face loss and grief, Jesus will console you...

When you face death, Jesus will take you home...

Why is it so hard then to turn to Jesus each day?
Young Moslem men in Iraq and Afghanistan are throwing their lives away
and killing others – dying for Allah...
Why is it so hard to us to live for Jesus?

Why is it so hard to tell Jesus that we love Him?
He loves us...
He showed the depth of his love for us by dying on that cross for us and for
our sins...
And please don't tell me you are sinless!

Conclusion...

In the Book of Revelation, Chapter 3 at verse 20 Jesus says:

Behold I stand at the door and knock,

If anyone opens the door

I will come in with her or him,

And dine with them,

And they with me...

In today's Gospel Mary sat with Jesus, dined with Jesus, let Jesus into her
heart.

Jesus stands at the door of *our* hearts right now...

Can you hear Him knocking?

Open the door and invite Jesus into your heart right now...

Let's bow our heads and pray...

Please respond by saying.... Come into my heart.

Jesus my savior...
Jesus my Lord...
Jesus my redeemer...

Jesus my brother...
Jesus my friend...
Jesus my guide...

Jesus my peace...
Jesus my comfort...
Jesus my joy...

Pause...

O Jesus, come into my heart today and each day of my life.
Help me to turn to you each day and invite you into my life each day.
Help me to be your disciple in the journey of my daily life.

At communion time in this Mass,
Come into my heart,
Share your very Body and Blood with me...
Strengthen me to accept the challenge of being your disciple in my world
each day,
Help me to live my life for you...

Amen? Amen.