

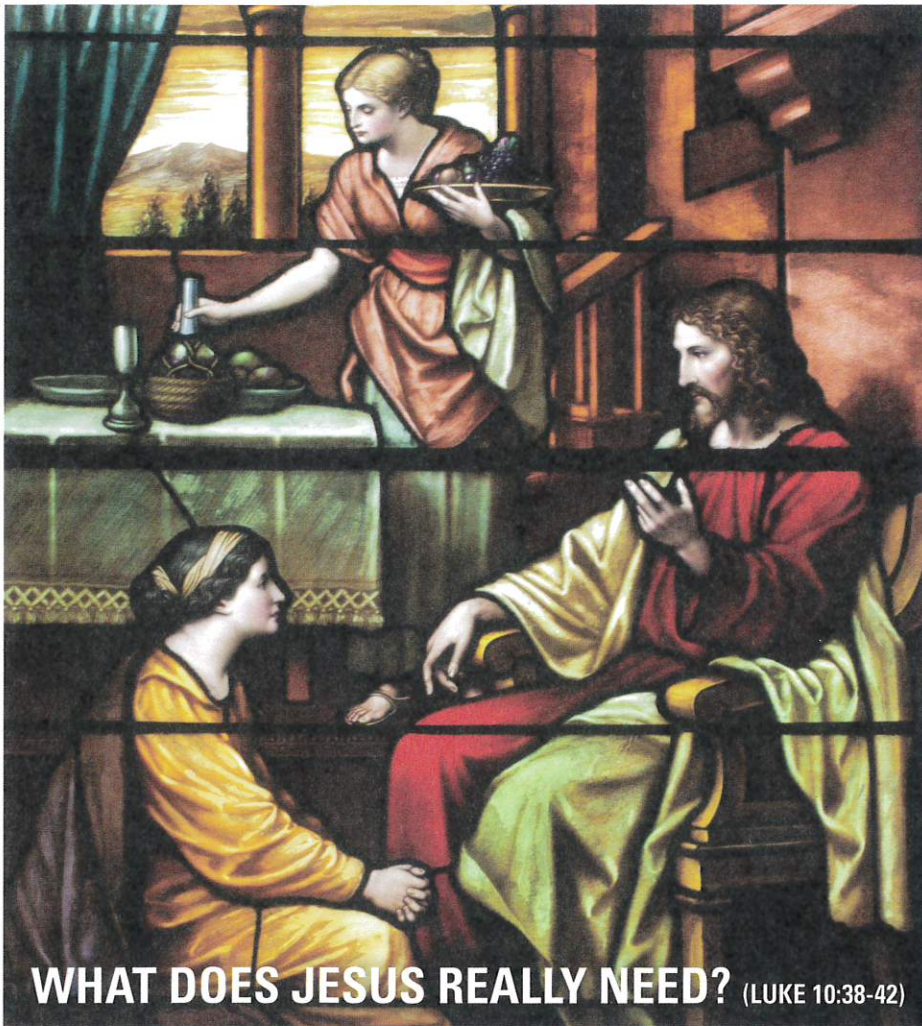
17 JULY 2022

Sunday Message

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • Psalter Week 4



WHAT DOES JESUS REALLY NEED? (LUKE 10:38-42)

Stained glass window depicting visit of Jesus to home of Martha and Mary

In the course of his journey to Jerusalem, Jesus is welcomed into the house of a woman named Martha and her sister, Mary. Women feature more prominently, and by name, in the Gospel version of Luke than in the other accounts.

In this episode, Jesus encounters hospitality, not just friendliness or politeness, but an essential element in the culture of that time and place. Up to now, we have heard warnings and examples about hostility and rejection. But even in this apparently cosy, domestic scene there is a message. ■

LEARN

The word used for "serving" in Luke's Gospel is the root from which we derive "deacon" and "diaconate".

The subject of the verb in Luke's Gospel is, apart from Jesus, women.

Women are those who supported Jesus and his other disciples out of their own resources.

Hospitality, offering protection and safety toward the stranger and pilgrim, was a sacred duty in the time of Jesus.

DO

Donate to the St Vincent de Paul Society in your parish: better, how could you help in their ministry of befriending lonely people in your area?

SAY

Will you let me be your servant, be as Christ to you?
(Richard Gillard)

REFLECT

One method of meditation encourages us to place ourselves in the Gospel scene which we are considering. So, if we imagine Jesus in the house of Martha and Mary, we might ask ourselves, "What did Jesus really need at this moment?" Perhaps he was tired from his journey, exasperated with his male disciples and their lack of understanding about himself and his mission. On a purely human level, maybe he simply needed to talk, which would mean that he needed someone to listen to him.

Most of us would feel sympathy for Martha: we can imagine the clashing of pots and pans increasing in volume as her frustration at being left in the kitchen to prepare the meal alone grows. Eventually, her patience runs out and she bursts into the conversation between Jesus and Mary. But if she had her way, Jesus would be left sitting alone while the two of them busied themselves in the kitchen. Is that what hospitality means? Does it centre on the accepted duties of the host being fulfilled, or is it a matter of meeting the needs of the guest? What were Jesus' needs at this point? A meal, or rather human company and attention?

Martha is clear about her duties towards her guest. But Jesus gently points out that perhaps she has got her priorities wrong. She is concerned about fulfilling her responsibilities but seems totally unaware of the needs or feelings of her guest. Luke presents Jesus in his Gospel as a prophet, and the prophet is the bearer of the word, which has to be spoken and to be listened to. In this sense, it is Mary who is presented as "choosing the better part". But Martha is avoiding listening to Jesus, although, from her point of view, she is doing the right thing. Luke is suggesting that the word of God takes precedence over other considerations.

What people really need is someone to listen to them, someone to talk to. It is natural to feel that making tea and providing sandwiches is the right thing to do to meet someone's immediate needs. Often well-meaning people will busy themselves in such ways but have no time to spend with the persons to whom they are ministering. On a practical level, the story of Martha and Mary is posing an important question: what does the person in front of you really need? Whose needs are you addressing: theirs or yours? ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

See, I have God for my help.
The Lord sustains my soul.
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart,
and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants
and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace,
that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity,
they may be ever watchful in keeping your
commands.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Genesis 18:1-10

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The Lord appeared to Abraham at the Oak of Mamre while he was sitting by the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up, and there he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them, and bowed to the ground. "My Lord," he said "I beg you, if I find favour with you, kindly do not pass your servant by. A little water shall be brought; you shall wash your feet and lie down under the tree. Let me fetch a little bread and you shall refresh yourselves before going further. That is why you have come in your servant's direction." They replied, "Do as you say."

Abraham hastened to the tent to find Sarah. "Hurry," he said "knead three bushels of flour and make loaves." Then running to the cattle Abraham took a fine and tender calf and gave it to the servant, who hurried to prepare it. Then taking cream, milk and the calf he had prepared, he laid all before them, and they ate while he remained standing near them under the tree.

"Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "She is in the tent" he replied. Then his guest said, "I shall visit you again next year without fail and your wife will then have a son."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 14

Response:

The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

1. Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?
He who walks without fault;
he who acts with justice
and speaks the truth from his heart;
he who does not slander with his tongue.
(R.)
2. He who does no wrong to his brother,
who casts no slur on his neighbour,
who holds the godless in disdain,
but honours those who fear the Lord. (R.)
3. He who keeps his pledge, come what may;
who takes no interest on a loan
and accepts no bribes against the innocent.
Such a man will stand firm for ever. (R.)

SECOND READING

Colossians 1:24-28

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians.

It makes me happy to suffer for you, as I am suffering now, and in my body to do what I can to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church. I became the servant of the Church when God made me responsible for delivering God's message to you, the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries and has now been revealed to his saints. It was God's purpose to reveal it to them and to show all the rich glory of this mystery to pagans. The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory: this is the Christ we proclaim, this is the wisdom in which we thoroughly train everyone and instruct everyone, to make them all perfect in Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 10:38-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha who was distracted with all the serving said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me." But the Lord answered: "Martha, Martha," he said "you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part; it is not to be taken from her."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice
brought to completion varied offerings of
the law,
accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your
faithful servants
and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts
of Abel,
so that what each has offered to the honour
of your majesty
may benefit the salvation of all.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful,
has made a memorial of his wonders;
he gives food to those who fear him.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Graciously be present to your people,
we pray, O Lord,
and lead those you have imbued with
heavenly mysteries
to pass from former ways to newness of life.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.