



Sunday 20th July 2025

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Gospel Reading

Luke 10.38-42

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. 39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. 40 But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' 41 But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; 42 there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

Other Readings: Amos 8.1-12v

Psalm 52

Colossians 1.15-28

Homily

On this Sunday the Church prays for each of us that in our vocation and ministry we may serve God in holiness and truth.

That is no small matter!

It recognises that the source, meaning and purpose of our life is found in God alone, who is revealed to us in the life, teaching and ministry of Jesus, the 'image of the invisible God', as the apostle Paul reminds us.

It recognises that in baptism we are all called to live a life that ministers the countless gifts of God's grace. We are to be channels of the love of God that has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Such a high call to holiness and truth is, indeed, no small matter!

For we live in a confused and confusing world dominated by conflicting claims to truthful ways of living. We are not immune from such confusion as we seek to understand and work out our call in Christ.

In the face of a world broken by conflicts and injustice, we see, with the prophet Amos, a world that all too often tramples on the needy and ignores the ruination of the poor. A world easily blinded by its self-serving pursuit of the power, prestige and possessions that will, it believes, give it the security, esteem and control it 'deserves'.

When pondering the meaning of our faith we can often be torn between the cruel realities of the world as it is, and the cry of the prophets, apostles and saints who point to a world as God intended it to be. They point us to God come among us in Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life of all who put their trust in him.

We see this in the witness of the holy sisters of Bethany, Mary and Martha.

Having met and welcomed Jesus into their lives, these two sisters placed their whole trust in him, and model for each and every one of us the way of Christian discipleship.

And so, we may ask, how do they do that?

As we explore the answer, let us first ponder an image: 'two eyes but one vision'.

Or we might more commonly say, 'two sides of the same coin'. The point is that they both model the same reality, the same vision of life.

We will miss the point entirely if we understand them as mutually exclusive and in opposition to each other; two different and competing ways of being Christian, of which we must choose one or the other! This is not an artificial 'either/or' choice between prayer or action but rather a call to a truly enlightened and transformed life in Christ.

Martha and Mary model the 'two hands' of a mature, truthful and loving Christian response to the challenges of this fallen, mired and broken world that cries out of the countless needs we are daily reminded of.

In Mary we see our need to draw close and hear Christ's life-giving words, to let them renew our minds and enflame our hearts. To know and abide in the presence of Christ revealed among us, in the scriptures, our prayer, the breaking of bread, our neighbours and even our enemies.

Martha also models that transformed mind and heart we are called to strive for and live from, as we see in St. John's account of her words to Jesus after the death of her brother, Lazarus; with mind and heart no longer scattered, distracted and fretting, but rooted in Christ, she declares, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God.' (John 11.27).

As we pray for each other in our vocation and ministries and ponder our call to offer our lives as a living sacrifice of dedication, witness and service; let us remember the witness of Amos, Paul, Mary and Martha, who point us to the God in whom is truthful and abundant life.

With them let us strive for the transformation of our lives by drawing close to and rooting ourselves in Christ, that we may learn anew how to think, speak and act honestly, with kindness and compassion. That with renewed minds and enflamed hearts, we may be channels of the love of God by doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with our God. Amen.

Conversation Questions

1. How have you previously thought of Martha and Mary?
2. In what ways might Mary and Martha now inform your own sense of calling in Christ?
3. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
4. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry
they may serve you in holiness and truth
to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*Almighty God,
send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

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