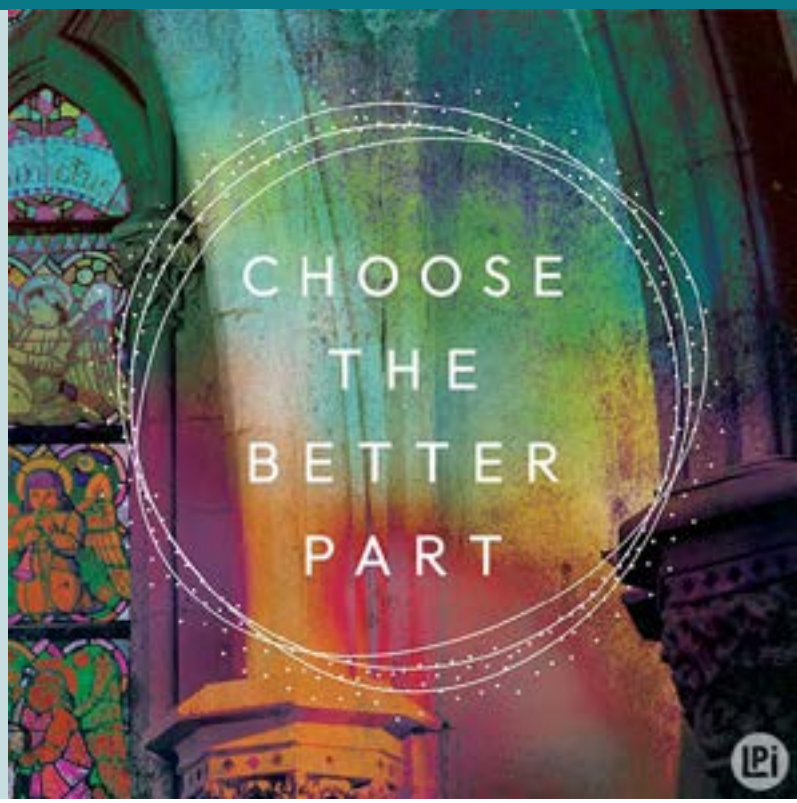
CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, July 17, 2022

Distracted Visits with Jesus

Written by Allison Gingras

Genesis 18:1-10a
Colossians 1:24-28
Luke 10:38-42



Martha, busy serving and fretting, loses sight of just who this special guest is that has come to her home to dine. There is a subtle connection between this week's Gospel story and the Eucharist. We can come to Mass so busy and distracted that we perfunctorily go through the motions of Mass, forgetting whom we are so privileged to receive. We all easily forget to be like Mary and choose the best part.

Jesus has come to visit the family in Bethany and share a meal. At Mass, we come to Jesus' house to visit and, yes, share a meal. We, like Martha, may approach Jesus frenzied, anxious, and worried about many things — work, home, or family. Perhaps we are also aggravated at someone we think should be assisting us, lending a hand, or helping out somehow.

Jesus' words to Martha that "there is need of only one thing" should refocus our attention, too, on what is truly important. Like Martha, our eyes should remember who is before us. Sitting at His feet fills us with all the blessings and graces necessary for whatever lies ahead. Whether we face days of strife, hardship, or smooth sailing, it is inconsequential if we've not made developing a relationship with Christ our number one priority.

In all things, Jesus' presence can restore and maintain our peace, keeping us steadfast in the hope of what's to come, not just overwhelmed by the task before us. Jesus is truly present before us in the Eucharist. This time in Mass is our opportunity to choose the better part. To leave our toiling behind and sit at the master's feet. To learn from his teaching, absorb his every word, to worship him in thanksgiving, and receive him — body, blood, soul, and divinity. The place we come "to rest under the tree… [and]

refresh yourselves; and afterward, you may go on your way" (Gen 18:1-10). When we eat, we digest the food we've consumed, converting it into fuel for our bodies. However, when we consume Jesus in the Eucharist, he changes us, producing an in-dwelling of grace — fuel for our soul.

Jesus in the Eucharist is fully, truly present under the guise of bread and wine. In the flesh, no wonder Mary of Bethany preferred to sit by his side rather than scurry about and miss this incredible privilege to be in the master's presence.

I remember a time in my life when I attended Mass with more of a Martha than a Mary mindset. I would grab a bulletin on my way into the church. During the Mass readings, I would daydream, running the week's chores and tasks through my mind. During the homily, I would doodle my to-do list in the margins of the bulletin. My mind would wander again during the Consecration, unaware of the supernatural, glorious, awe-inspiring event happening upon the altar before me. The moment heaven and earth mystically collided — the humble substance of bread and wine became the even more humble substance of my Lord and Savior. The number one to-do on my list unfolded before me, yet I was distracted and longed to be someplace else. Then, driving home, I'd complain about never getting anything out of Mass.

Of course, I didn't. Like Martha, I'd let the world cloud my vision and keep me from the one thing needed — the better part. Praise God, like Mary, it was not to be taken from me. Eventually, as I learned more about the Catholic faith and the beauty and magnificence of the Sacred Liturgy, I allowed myself to be present to all Jesus had for me in those moments. I left my agenda at the door and surrendered every moment of this visit to him.

In the words of St. Paul and the wisdom Mary possessed which Martha would soon learn, the better part exists in "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." (Col 1:26-28) Most significantly, in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Allison Gingras

PRAYER

Lord,
I am anxious and worried about many things.
Help me to remember there is need of only one thing — You.
You who comes to me in the Mass, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.
Provide me the grace, to choose the better part and not allow it to be taken from me.
Amen.