

Today's Gospel is the familiar story of two sisters- Martha & Mary- who welcomed Jesus into their home,...but the two had entirely different ways of showing Jesus their hospitality...Martha, was busy in the kitchen preparing a meal to serve to Jesus,...while Mary was sitting with the disciples at the feet of Jesus listening to His every word... Martha was upset that her lazy sister wasn't helping her at all, ...so she asks Jesus to make Mary get up off her butt & lend her a hand....But Jesus – being Jesus - doesn't grant her request.

Instead, He essentially tells Martha that she's got her priorities all wrong...The lesson I'd like us to take from today's Gospel is this: from time-to-time we need to examine OUR own priorities when it comes to our relationship with Jesus...Now, whenever we examine our priorities, it usually means looking at two or more good things ...& deciding which of those good things is the one we should give our attention to first.....Here's an example.

A group of friends went hunting, & one morning they go off into the woods two by two...At the end of the day, one of the hunters comes out of the woods ALONE ,...staggering along, carrying a deer on his back...One of the other hunters asks him,.. "Hey Al, where's Harry?"..."Oh, Harry had some kind of a stroke or something. He's about a mile back up the trail.".. .."You mean you left Harry laying there alone,.. & you carried the deer back?"..."Well, yah. I figured who was going to steal Harry?" ...You see, to Al bringing the deer out of the woods was in itself a good thing,... but taking care of Harry was a better, more important good thing.... Al had his priorities wrong.

That's how it was with Martha...Now, when Jesus said to her, " Martha, you are anxious & worried about many things... There is need of only one thing...Mary has chosen the better part,".. He wasn't putting Martha down....After all, a meal had to be prepared & the guests had to be served. ... Martha was doing a good thing, but she was putting that good thing ahead of the better thing: being with Jesus, sitting at the feet of her Lord,...taking in the words of the One to whom Peter once said, "Lord, You have the words of everlasting life." ..Martha was a good person; she loved Jesus & wanted to serve Him,...but at that moment her priorities were backward... She was placing more importance on the earthly thing - feeding her guests - than on the heavenly thing – being with J...listening to Jesus.

Some years ago, at a Catholic Youth Conference at Steubenville University,...the theme was how we – as Christians- need to keep our priorities in order...That weekend, both adults & teens heard over & over how Jesus should be the center of EVERY part of our life:... the top dog, king of the hill, the big kahuna, number 1, numero uno...It should be all about Jesus...When we make our relationship with Jesus our top priority, all our other priorities become easier because we'll have His help in getting them done...

But if we put something other than Jesus at the top,...our life will always be a little off kilter...It's sort of like this... Have you ever been running late & you had to get dressed in a hurry,... & you start buttoning your shirt real fast without looking, and when you get down to the last button, there's no button hole for that button? ...The whole shirt is buttoned unevenly because you got the top button wrong & that made all the other buttons wrong. .. If you don't get the top button right, the whole shirt is out of whack... If we don't get our top **life** priority right – Jesus Christ - then our whole life will be out of whack.

Jesus said to Martha, "You are anxious & worried about many things." ...My friends, the "many things" Jesus was talking about are always gonna be there...There's always the meal to prepare & serve,...the lawn to mow, .. the kids to transport,... the test to study for,...the cell phone to

answer,... the appointment to keep,.. the project to complete,...& on and on...And before we know it, the day is gone... Then the week. Then the month... & before we know it...we're a year older. ..Then one day our life is gone...And we've not taken the time to sit at the feet of Jesus

In our Gospel, Jesus doesn't tell Martha or us to neglect our earthly responsibilities...He knows those things are important.... What He's saying is we shouldn't let them keep us from our main responsibility: attending to our spiritual needs,.. placing ourselves in His presence...What Jesus wants is for us to take the time – make the time - to sit at His feet as Mary did and listen, listen to what He has to tell us...And there's no reason why we can't do that,... why we can't take 5 or 10 minutes a day to read and meditate on the Gospels - just 5 or 10 minutes...

There's so much in there that Jesus tells us that will help us gauge how we are doing in our Christian walk, & - most importantly -will help us to see how we can do better

And, of course, we can listen to Jesus speaking to us in our prayer time,...but 1st we have to set aside a prayer time, ...a time to be still & let Him speak to us in the quiet of our hearts, & in our thoughts, as we sit at His feet & listen to Him.

When we make the time to sit at His feet and listen to Him,.. we'll find that it helps us do all those other things better:... prepare that meal,.. mow that lawn,.. keep that appointment,.. study for that test,.. finish that project... They'll all get done, ...& with a lot less anxiety and stress because we made spending time with Jesus our top priority...When we get Jesus - the top button right - all the other buttons of our life will line up.

Have you ever thought about how unbelievably lucky we are to have Jesus Christ,.. & have you ever wondered what life would be like without Him...if God had decided NOT to send us His Son?... I can't imagine navigating through life's troubles & trials, with no Jesus to turn to,...to lean on,... to look to for guidance & forgiveness & strength & hope... Can you?... If God hadn't sent Jesus Christ,...none of us would make it to heaven...We'd all end up where every unredeemed sinner deserves to end up... Well,...thanks to our loving God, we DO have Jesus Christ... Thank You, God!...Thank You, Lord!

Author Steven Covey, wrote a very popular book: *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*..In it, he, gives this advice for effective living: "The main thing is to keep the **main** thing the main thing." (*repeat*)...My friends, for Christians, Jesus is the MAIN thing... Jesus, the living bread come down from heaven, ...the Holy One of God, ...the One who has the Words of eternal life. ...Eternal life that begins not at our death, but right now...Eternity begins at our next breath. ...& at each & every breath, we choose who or what is the MAIN THING in our life...Like, Mary, let's choose the better part; let's make Jesus the MAIN THING. AMEN