

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 21, 2019

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: SG 3:1-4B OR 2 COR 5:14-17/JN 20:2-32,11-28

TUESDAY: EX 14:21-15:1/MT 12:46-50

WEDNESDAY: EX 16:1-5, 91-15/MT 13:1-9

THURSDAY: 2 COR 4:7-14/MT 20:20-28

FRIDAY: EX 20:1-17/MT 13:18-23

SATURDAY: EX 24:3-8/MT 13:24-30

NEXT SUNDAY: SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – RDGS: GN 18:20-32/COL 2:12-14/LKK 11:1-13



Not only has Mary demonstrated a certain amount of wisdom in choosing to listen to Jesus but that what she hears and its effects will remain with her. Thus is the power of the Spirit of God which, when taking hold of our hearts, allows us to enjoy the many gifts and fruits available to us. At this point I always encourage folks to return to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and read the section on the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. These constitute a holy “arsenal” necessary for our battle in the spiritual life. For those uncomfortable with military references we can employ a variety of others, from horticultural to sports, in order to accomplish the same sort of thing and that is the part we inevitably play in the spiritual life. It must first be admitted that there is a part we are called to play. Grace just does not come to us, no matter how hard we pray, since it is quite possible that our prayer may reveal a rather faulty understanding of the role of grace and, at the same time, our role in the spiritual life. Let us admit that first, our spiritual life is not some sort of competition, regardless of some of our sports metaphors. Nor is our spiritual life simply one activity among many that we have only a short time in which to accomplish and to see measurable results. Our spiritual life is first and foremost a relationship with the living God, the Father through His Son and in the Holy Spirit. By that we mean an ongoing encounter with the God who loves us and who, giving us his only Begotten Son who shares with us that Spirit of love which exists between the Father and Son allows us to be so united with God as to share in the Divine Life. This sharing is what we call the spiritual life. Sharing in a relationship requires work but our friendships; our relationships are not regarding as simply activities nor are we constantly evaluating them to see if we are able to achieve any tangible evidence of progress from them. Our progress comes in the form of deeper and greater love. In the case of our relationship with God it is not that we have loved him but that he has loved us first and it is through that Divine Love that we ourselves are made more lovable and hence more able to love after the manner of God. Choosing the better part, the Son we are never deprived of Jesus commitment to help us to become more like in recognizing our Father and loving that Father in Spirit and Truth. This is the spiritual life, this is the better part and it is ours for eternity.

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: ANITA ECKMAN

TUESDAY: PAT BURDINE

WEDNESDAY: SPECIAL INTENTION

THURSDAY: GEORGE KELLER

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: FRANK MCMILLEN

7:30: STACY BROWN

10:00: FRED HARLESS

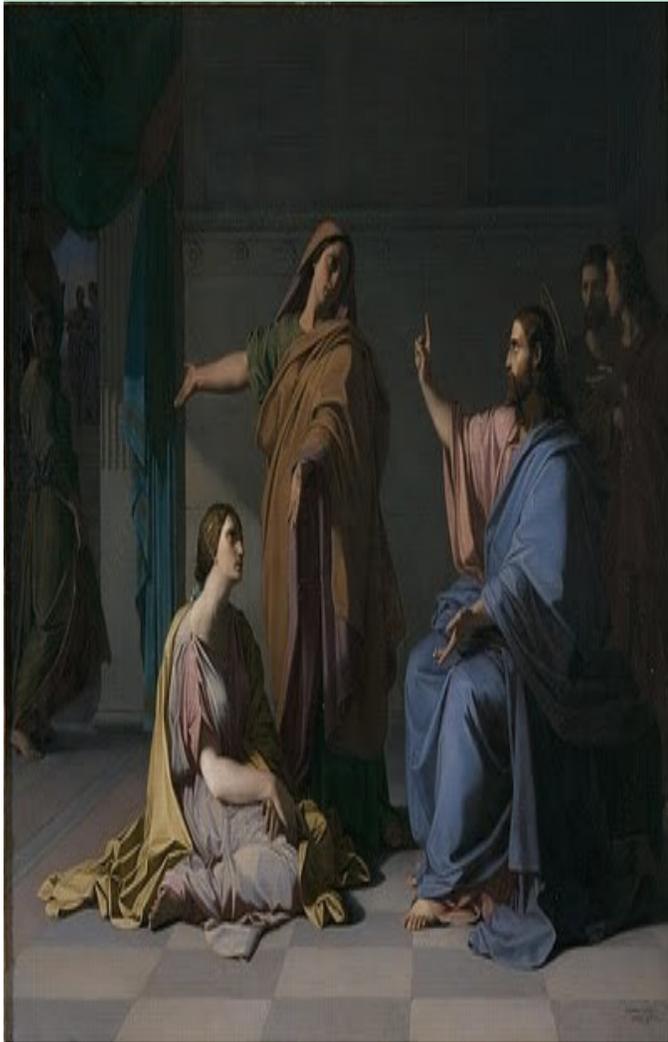
NOON: FOR THE PARISH

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

All members of St. Ann’s parish, families-living & deceased. Marian Schwartz. (Gene & Genevieve Bullock & Hank & Jean Corbin). (Mrs. Pat Kingma & Mrs. Joanne Irwin). (Karen Fox, Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh). Nufer/Vogel families, (Frank & Evelyn Meyer, Paul & Marjorie Byrd). (Ann Owen, M/M Lewis Owen, M;M Donald Yantis, Patricia Yantis, Geraldine Erwin). Janice Anderson. Jane Clapp. Jody Dixon.

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Choosing the Better Part

*Beset with snares on every hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand:
Saviour divine, diffuse Thy light,
To guide my doubtful footsteps right.
Engage this roving, treacherous heart
To fix on Mary's better part,
To scorn the trifles of the day
For joys that none can take away.
Then let the wildest storms arise;
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck shall I fear,
But all my treasures with me bear.
Since Thou, my Jesus, still art nigh,
Cheerful I live, and joyful die;
Secure, when mortal comforts flee,
To find ten thousand worlds in Thee!*

-- Philip Doddridge, 1755. (altered)

From C.H. Spurgeon's "Our Own Hymnbook"

Choosing the "Better Part"

Recognizing the Danger of Spiritual Distractions

Has any saint received more negative press than Martha? All she did was ask Jesus to tell her sister to help her with the chores, and she ended up being branded as spiritually dull, overly anxious, or even worse, spiteful. After all, Jesus rejected Martha's request and even told her that her own priorities were out of order.

What was wrong with Martha's behavior? Why did she receive this unexpected rebuke from Jesus? Was it sinful for her to have wanted everything to be perfect for such an important guest as Jesus? Was it sinful to clean and cook? Don't we all act this way when family or close friends come to visit our home?

In fact, Jesus was probably pleased by the way Martha tried to make everything just right. He probably felt honored by her desire to serve him so graciously. So why did Jesus say what he said? Because he wanted Martha—and all of us—to know that there is a point where our tasks consume us, rob us of our peace, and separate us from God.

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We are all guilty of being distracted. We are all guilty of working on the things we consider vital and important—only at the expense of our relationship with Jesus. This month, we want to put ourselves in Martha's shoes and look at the way our responsibilities in the world can distract us and block us from receiving Jesus and all that he wants to give us.

Active and Contemplative. In a sense, we can say that Martha represents all of the members of the church who feel led to spend their lives on the *active* work of the church. Those of us in this category want to serve Jesus and his people with our whole heart. On the other hand, Martha's sister Mary represents those of us who tend toward the *contemplative* side of Christianity. Those of us in this category place a high value on being with Jesus, talking with him, and listening for his still, small voice.

Of course, very few of us are 100 percent active or 100 percent contemplative. Most of us who tend toward the active category do spend time in prayer. It wouldn't be too hard to imagine even Martha on her knees at different times. Similarly, most of us who tend toward the contemplative category do spend some time in active service. We really can't assume that Mary failed to carry some share of work around the house or in the neighborhood. So to be accurate, we should be clear that we are talking about degrees of activity and service versus *degrees* of contemplation and prayer.

What was at the heart of Jesus' rebuke to Martha? It was the way she became distracted from the Lord and his words, not her heartfelt desire to serve, that he sought to correct. Martha was immersed in the preparations. The demands of service overwhelmed her and made her anxious and judgmental toward her sister. As a result, Martha sank into a pool of self-pity and self-righteousness, prompting Jesus' response. We can just imagine, after this episode, Jesus telling her, "Don't lose your peace, Martha. Don't go overboard and let your desire to serve me overshadow all the ways that *I* want to serve *you*."

Isn't it amazing? From our earliest days, we are taught to give and give and give. It's as if the service is in our blood. That's probably why Martha felt justified in her request to Jesus. The problem was that she didn't grasp Jesus' teaching that it is more critical for him to serve us than for us to serve him. In truth, we really cannot "outgive" Jesus.

Two Levels of Distractions. As the story of Mary and Martha demonstrates, being distracted from the Lord means being preoccupied with someone or some thing to such an extent that we experience a degree of separation from Jesus. Sometimes these distractions come from evil temptations, while at other times they come from our own motivations and mind-sets.

Clearly, not all distractions are alike. On one level, there are times when the sinful lures of the world distract us and turn our attention away from Jesus. But on a deeper level, we can also be distracted by our own good intentions, as Martha was. On this level, even our work, our families, and our service to the church have the potential to distract us from Jesus.

At the lower level, it's temptations toward immorality, gossip, deceit, and the like that distract us from the Lord. These temptations tell us that we need to do this certain action to feel fulfilled, or that we *have a right* to do it, even though we know that it may well be opposed to the way Jesus wants us to think and act. Whether they come from the devil or from our own fallen nature, these temptations deceive us by encouraging us to focus only on the supposed benefits of the temptation. Then, when we have given in to them, they prey upon our consciences, often leading to a bitter aftertaste filled with guilt and shame.

This was the problem King David faced not long after he became ruler of all Israel. While his entire army was out fighting the Ammonites, David stayed home. With nothing to motivate him to keep his eyes fixed on God, and an idle mind, he fell into adultery with Bathsheba. Then, in an attempt to cover up his sin, he arranged the death of Bathsheba's husband Uriah. Normally a fair and just man, David couldn't see anything wrong with what he did. His conscience became so dulled that he let his mind wander unchecked, to the point where he justified deception, adultery, and even murder.

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Generally, the "lower-level" distractions such as the ones David faced are not too hard to spot. By contrast, the "higher-level" ones—the ones that are rooted mostly in good intentions—are more murky. At this level, we can become distracted from the Lord when we allow our responsibilities, our goals, and the normal demands of life to dominate our minds and preoccupy us. This was why Jesus rejected Martha's request. If she had prepared a simpler meal, if she had held on to her peace and found the time to sit with Jesus as Mary did, it's likely that Jesus would not have chided her.

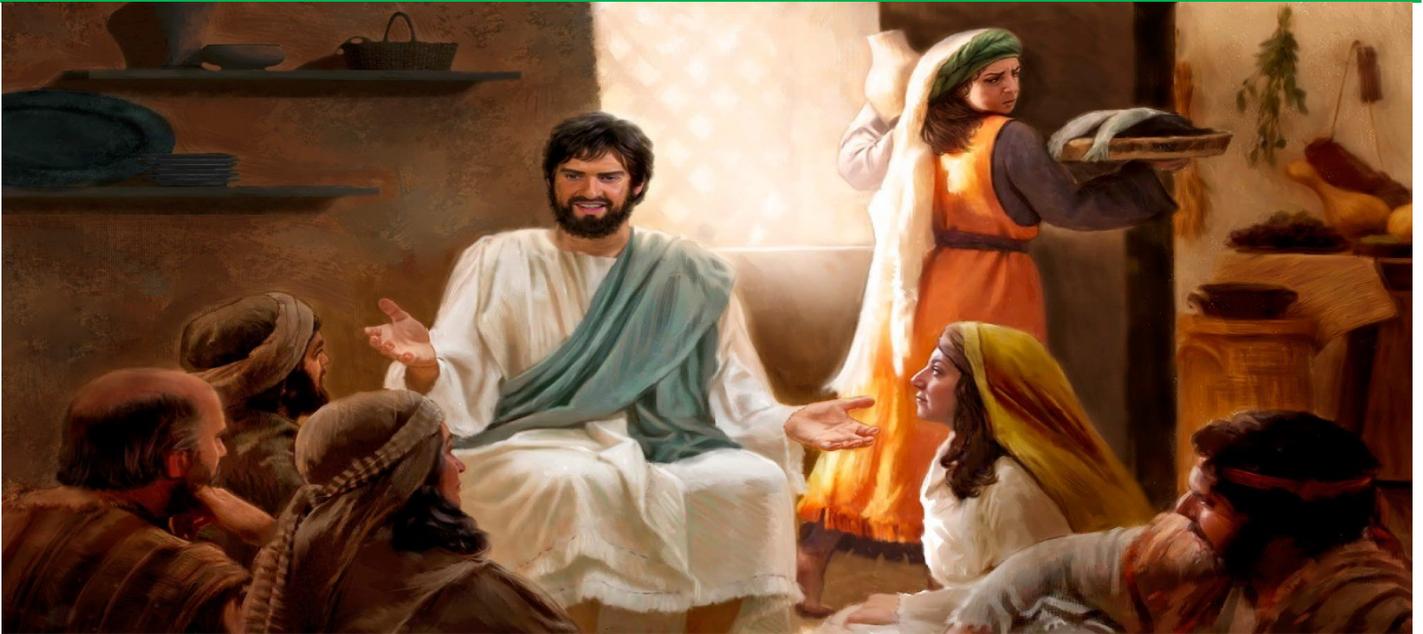
Facing Our Distractions with Hope. If we want to grow closer to Jesus, then we need to address both the lower-level distractions and the higher-level ones. Jesus told the adulterous woman to go and sin no more (John 8:11). He told the man at the pool of Bethesda to avoid further sin (5:14). He even told the apostles to stop fighting among themselves and to concentrate on serving each other instead (Luke 22:24-26). In the same way, Jesus wants us to examine ourselves and see if we are being distracted by any of these lower-level lures.

At the same time, we need to be on guard against the "good" distractions, such as our work, our financial responsibilities, our marriages, and our families. As important as these activities and responsibilities may be, they too have the power to turn our attention away from Jesus by offering us a false sense of security or fulfillment.

It sounds like a lot of hard work, doesn't it? But before you lose hope and conclude that you can't manage all the distractions in your life, consider this: Jesus was tempted by one empty promise after another. He knows firsthand how difficult it is to resist temptation. He also knows how much we are tempted every day. Just think: Jesus knew all of this when he spoke to Martha, and still he called her to change. Evidently, Jesus believed that Martha could change. And what's even more encouraging, we can bet that Jesus was ready to help Martha overcome her distractions—just as he stands ready even today to give us the grace we need to overcome.

God didn't give up on David, Moses, or Paul, even though they all had innocent blood on their hands. He didn't give up on the Samaritan woman, even though she had been divorced five times and was currently living in sin. He doesn't give up on any sheep that wanders away and gets lost. And he won't give up on us.

Jesus told Martha about a *better way*, and he wants to show us this way. He has but one purpose in mind: to tell us that we are God's beloved children and that he always holds us close to his heart. So whether we face lower-level distractions or higher-level ones, we can deal with them and be freed from their influence. And as that happens, we will find ourselves more and more willing—even eager—to spend time each day sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to him. And that can only result in one thing: Our relationship with him will grow more and more intimate by the day. **Read more at: <https://wau.org>**



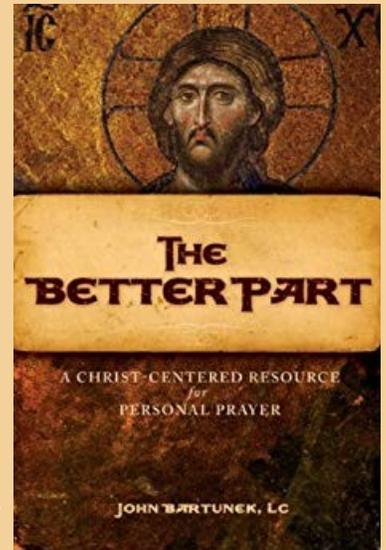
SUMMER READING - PLEASURE AND PROFIT

The book's title is a reference to Mary (sister of Martha) who chose the better part in listening to Christ. Fr. John Bartunek, LC, gives us a guide to listen to Christ and enter in to conversation with him. The four Gospels are the means of hearing Christ speak to us. The book includes the entire Gospel from the Jerusalem Bible, a beautifully written translation.

The starting point is a 50 page introduction to prayer and meditation, with guidance on how to best use the book. Fr. Bartunek explains that the content is not designed as a treatise on the spiritual life, nor bible exegesis, nor catechesis. The objective is to encounter Christ in prayer through the Gospel and by way of the will, the mind, and the heart in order to incorporate Christ's message into daily life.

Because the book is a resource rather than a fixed method, there are many ways to approach the book depending on personal preferences. One index matches readings with the liturgical calendar and a second is arranged by topics. The book can also be adapted for use in small groups by using the four discussion questions at the end of each section.

There are 303 sections divided into six parts: 1. the Gospel text, 2. Christ the Lord, 3. Christ the Teacher, 4. Christ the Friend, 5. Christ in My Life, and 6. Questions for small group discussion. There are quotes from saints and popes at the beginning of each section and references to the Catechism following the discussion questions. Each section is about 4 pages long, totaling 1020 pages. (Order through Amazon Smile to benefit Matthew 25 Soup Kitchen)



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Announcements and Upcoming Events

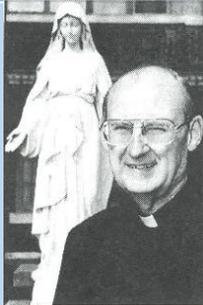
Welcome Home supplies needed

LTHC Homeless Services (formerly known as Lafayette Transitional Housing) is opening Union Place Apartments (1200 block of Union & Salem) this fall and is asking for the community's support with household items for the 40 new units. The facility will house formerly homeless individuals and couples with a disabling condition. We want the units to be stocked with all the basic household necessities so residents will feel welcomed when they walk in the door of their new home.

Can you help?

Go to this link for a list of items needed: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508094AAEAD23A1FD0-welcome>.

Donations may be taken to the LTHC Homeless Services offices on the first floor of the Howarth Bldg., SE corner of Union and 18th St. Monetary donations can be mailed or dropped off to Jennifer Shook, LTHC Homeless Services, 615 N. 18th St., Lafayette, IN 47904. For more information, visit www.LTHC.net or email info@lthc.net.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR for Tuesday, August 13, from 4:30 to 7 PM (EDT) to attend the Silver Episcopal Jubilee and Diamond Priesthood Jubilee for Bishop William Higi, fifth Bishop of our diocese. The event will be held in Anderson, IN; at St. Ambrose Church (which has A/C). Light sandwiches, non-alcoholic beverages and dessert will be served. **Please notify your parish office BEFORE August 6, 2019, so that they can notify Saint Ambrose for proper counts for serving those who attend.** Thank you.

ANNUAL PARISH NOVENA

JULY 21-28, 2019

SUNDAY: BREAKFAST 8-11:00

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY,
FRIDAY 5PM

EXPOSITION

RECONCILIATION

VESPERS

BENEDICTION

VENERATION OF RELIC OF ST. ANN

THURSDAY, NOVENA CONCERT FEATURING DAVID JARONOWSKI 6PM

SUNDAY: PARISH PICNIC AFTER THE NOON MASS-MEMORIAL HALL

SUNDAY OFFERING

\$6252

"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"

ST. AUGUSTINE