

Memorial of Saint Martha I & II
<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/0729-memorial-martha.cfm>

Reading 1 **1 JN 4:7-16**

Beloved, let us love one another,
because love is of God;
everyone who loves is begotten by God and
knows God.
Whoever is without love does not know God, for
God is love.
In this way the love of God was revealed to us:
God sent his only-begotten Son into the world
so that we might have life through him.
In this is love:
not that we have loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.
Beloved, if God so loved us,
we also must love one another.
No one has ever seen God.
Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us,
and his love is brought to perfection in us.

This is how we know that we remain in him and
he in us,
that he has given us of his Spirit.
Moreover, we have seen and testify
that the Father sent his Son as savior of the
world.
Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of
God,
God remains in him and he in God.
We have come to know and to believe in the love
God has for us.

God is love, and whoever remains in love
remains in God and God in him.

Gospel **LK 10:38-42**

Jesus entered a village
where a woman whose name was Martha
welcomed him.
She had a sister named Mary
who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to
him speak.
Martha, burdened with much serving, came to
him and said,
"Lord, do you not care

that my sister has left me by myself to do the
serving?
Tell her to help me."
The Lord said to her in reply,
"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried
about many things.
There is need of only one thing.
Mary has chosen the better part
and it will not be taken from her."

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"Martha, Martha ..."
Can you feel the chiding?

What is Martha doing wrong? She is the
first mentioned who welcomes Jesus as He
enters into the village. She seems to be
hustling about with the duties of hospitality.

While Scripture only names Jesus and the
two sisters, it is most probable that others
would also be there as it would have been
scandalous for Jesus to be alone with two
women in that culture.ⁱ

Jesus normally went about the countryside
with his attending disciples. Of course,
their brother, Lazarus, would have been
duty-bound to chaperone. I think there was
plenty of people and justification for
Martha to feel anxious.

And Jesus hasn't been shy about preaching
our duties to love our neighbor, feed the
hungry and clothe the naked.ⁱⁱ

So why does Mary have the better part?

Martha is busy trying to pull everything
together to feed the boys. Mary is being fed
by Jesus the words concerning ever-lasting
life.

As I reflect on my own fairly busy life, what
is it that I can take with me into ever-lasting
life?

When Jan and I got married, there was much wedding preparation and of course for the reception, too. What of that can I take with me into forever? How about the realization that I, being one of two, was now part of two becoming one? Can that help me to be open to our Heavenly Father in the communion offered through His Son?

In a sermon St. Augustine figuratively asks Martha,

But you, Martha, if I may say so, are blessed for your good service, and for your labors you seek the reward of peace.

Now you are much occupied in nourishing the body, admittedly a holy one. But when you come to the heavenly homeland will you find a traveller to welcome, someone hungry to feed, or thirsty to whom you may give drink, someone ill whom you could visit, quarrelling whom you could reconcile, or dead whom you could bury?

No, there will be none of these tasks there. What you will find there is what Mary chose.ⁱⁱⁱ

When you go about your daily duties and responsibilities, try to imagine what, of all of it, will you get to take with you into Paradise. What, of what you do, is the better part?

As you conclude your prayer time today, linger for a bit at Jesus' feet. Allow him to feed your soul. It will last unto forever- *et in saecula saeculorum. Amen*

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i John J. Pilch, The Cultural World of Jesus: Cycle C, p. 113

ii Luke 10:27; Matthew 25: 35-36

iii St. Augustine, 2nd reading of the Office, Liturgy of the Hours, memorial for St. Martha