

Pastoral Reflection
July 17, 2022
Sixteenth Sunday, Ordinary Time

Are you a Mary or a Martha? How many times have we been asked this question around today's Gospel about Mary sitting and listening to Jesus while Martha does all the work? Does it need to be a choice?

In the first reading, "the Lord appeared to Abraham" as he saw the three men and invited them to rest while he personally served them. The second reading has Paul advising the gentiles of Colossae that the glory of God's mystery is that Christ is in each of us. Jesus admonishes Martha, not because she is working and not sitting, but because she is "anxious and worried about many things when there is need of only one thing."

Perhaps the lesson is not whether to "do" or to "be", but rather about our attitude in each of them. This morning, I attended a group meditation given by Mary Middendorf around mindfulness. It was only a half-hour long, but the majority of the time was in sitting still and releasing our thoughts – lightening our mental burdens. Sr. Chabanel and Loren Gaillardetz lead a meditation group that meets twice monthly and spends their time in silence, releasing thoughts and just being with God. Many in our community take time each day to be still with God, or to reflect on God's Word while sitting in stillness. The gift of this stillness is in the realization that Christ is in each of us. As we go about our days and the work we need to do, we need to be aware of Christ within us and of seeing Christ in those we encounter throughout our day.

As Sr. Chabanel told us last week, it is how we leave one another, blessed or feeling bad, that makes all the difference. Perhaps Jesus was telling us, through Martha, that the "one thing" is to recognize, no matter what we are doing, that Christ is in us. Anxiety and worry will get us nowhere, and will just upset everyone around us. If we want to live in peace and bring peace to others, we need to be mindful of Christ within us, and leave others with less anxiety and more peace. Only then will our world find the peace it so desperately needs.

Peace be with you!

Diane Gozdzialski