

“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many ...things.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time, a father went to a parent-teacher conference at his son’s local high school. During a talk with one of his son’s teachers, the father broke down and began to cry.

After he regained his composure, the father apologized, saying:

“My son no longer lives with me. But I love him... & want to know how he’s doing in school.”

The father then told the teacher how his wife and children ‘left him’ that afternoon.

He was a building contractor and sometimes worked 16-hour days. Naturally, he saw little of his family and they, slowly, grew farther and farther apart.

Then the father said something very sad:

“I wanted to buy my wife and kids all those things I dreamed of giving them. But in the process, I got so involved in working ...that I forgot about what they needed the most: A husband and a father that was around at night to give them love and support.”

That true story illustrates the point of today’s Gospel, which I just read to you from St. Luke. What exactly is that point, you ask?

Well, I am glad you asked that question!

It is this:

We can get so involved in what we are doing that we forget why we are doing it.

We can get so involved in living that we forget the purpose of living.

We can get so involved in pursuing the things that money can buy... that we forget about the things money cannot buy!

It’s this kind of mistake that Martha made in today’s Gospel. She got so involved in cooking for Jesus that she forgot why Jesus had come. He didn’t come for a free meal, **BUT** to be with friends.

Today’s world is one quite different from the one in which most of us grew up. It is a fast-paced, noisy, cluttered, and sometimes a very scary place, especially in terms of terrorism. It is so easy to lose our balance. It is so easy to lose our perspective. It is so easy to get our priorities mixed up. It is so easy to lose sight of what we are doing and why we are doing it.

To clarify what I am saying, I now share with you this story:

Once upon a time, during WW II, a young soldier was stationed in Saipan in the Pacific. During his ‘time-off,’ he and friends would go for swims in a secluded spot, just off the steep cliffs of the island. It was a lovely place, surrounded by rocks.

When they arrived, the water was always so clear, they could see fish 10 feet below the surface. After they had swum for a bit, the water became so clouded with the sand churned up from the bottom, that they couldn’t see a foot below the surface.

But, the next day, when they returned, the sand was settled & the water was crystal-clear again.

Our mind is lot like that water. It can get so ‘churned up,’ so clouded from the turmoil of everyday living, that it’s hard for us to see clearly. We lose sight of so much. Our perspective gets clouded; our priorities get confused; our balance gets destroyed.

What we need to do when this happens is ...to pause and let the murky waters of our mind 'settle' and become clear again, crystal-clear. We need to do what Mary did in today's Gospel: We need to sit at the feet of Jesus in quiet prayer. We need to let him teach us, anew, what is important and what is not.

Today's Gospel is an invitation for us to do what Martha's sister Mary did: at a pre-set time, pause daily ...at the feet of Jesus, in quiet prayer, even if it means to... sit in God's waiting room.

This raises an important question: What if we've gotten so involved in life that we've lost the habit of prayer? What if we've forgotten, or never learned, how to 'sit quietly at the feet of Jesus?'

What follows is a system of prayer, which I have shared with you before, to help us pray. If you haven't done this, start tonight:

When your head hits the pillow, take 3 minutes to do 3 things:

During the 1st minute, pause and do a mental-replay of the day. Pick out the day's-highpoint, something we are happy about, like hearing from a friend. Then, speak to God-the-Father about it very sincerely. Finally, thank God about it ...and for your friend.

During the 2nd minute, do a 2nd mental-replay of the day. This time, pick out the low-point of the day ...something we are sorry about, like yelling at a parent, a spouse, a child, or a dear friend. Then speak to Jesus about it and ask him to forgive us and to heal us.

During the 3rd minute, look ahead to tomorrow, to a critical point. We think of some difficult thing we must do, like talking to someone about a problem that has arisen. We speak to the Holy Spirit about it and ask for his guidance and strength in handling it.

This method of prayer, not only puts us back in touch with life, but with our God ...the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

I now close with this prayer:

Lord, keep us from getting so involved in life that we forget why you gave us life.

Keep us from getting so involved in living that we forget the purpose of living.

***Keep us from getting so involved in pursuing the things that money can buy
...that we forget about the things that money can NOT buy!***

May the Triune-God bless you ...the Father-Abba, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.