



# Bringing Home the Word

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

July 17, 2022

## Bringing Jesus Into Our Work and Prayer

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Jesus enjoyed resting in the home of his friends Lazarus, Martha, and Mary because of their affection and hospitality. Martha was a big part of this hospitality because she was energetic and dedicated to making sure Jesus was cared for. Mary also made him feel at home as she was hungry for the Lord’s teaching. She was open, interested, and attentive.

Yet on this occasion Martha is overcome with the urgent and leaves aside the important. Martha receives Christ in her home while Mary brings

him into her heart. Living in relationship with Jesus always includes these two elements. Part of our love for him involves sitting at his feet in prayer. This is no doubt the “better part.” Yet, serving Jesus also requires an active, busy life of work and responsibilities. Far from being an obstacle, work should be an occasion for a closer relationship with Jesus.

The key is having a unifying center to life; that center should be Jesus. He is the “why” we do what we do—whether work, play, or pray. Martha wasn’t mistaken in serving Jesus’ needs, but she lost focus with anxiety and worries. How to maintain this focus? First, pray regularly to remain centered. Second, don’t sweat the small stuff at work or home. Third, frequently redirect your intention with a short, motivating motto like “All for you my Jesus” or “Your kingdom come!” Find one that works for you.

Let’s not lose sight of the Lord of our work when doing the work of the Lord.

***Far from being an obstacle, work should be an occasion for a closer relationship with Jesus.***

## Sunday Readings

### Genesis 18:1–10a

One of them said, “I will return to you about this time next year, and Sarah will then have a son.”

### Colossians 1:24–28

It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom.

### Luke 10:38–42

The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing.”

## A Word from Pope Francis

Simplicity ... allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack.

—Address to Participants in Journey of the Common Good, Rome, December 2, 2019



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I focus on daily tasks at the expense of ignoring what makes life truly meaningful?
- What steals my peace and causes me to lose focus on God?

# Stop! Look! Listen!

By Paige Byrne Shortal

Reading has clicked for my little granddaughter, and she is very proud of her new skill. One morning as we approached some railroad tracks, she startled me by shouting, “STOP! LOOK! LISTEN!” I did. And then I explained to her the dangers of shouting at the driver.

Jesus cried out such a warning sometimes. He often prefaced life-changing statements with “Amen, amen, I say to you” (Jn 3:5). Perhaps we need something like that in the Gospel Acclamation at Mass. Because we’re about to hear something life changing. Because if we don’t pay attention we could be in danger.

As I read through the Sunday Gospel passages for this month, there are two that stand out. Perhaps because I’ve heard them so often and know them so well—or think I do—I haven’t paid close enough attention when they’re read at Mass. But today I hear them differently as I think, *Stop! Look! Listen!*

Today we hear the familiar story of Jesus’ visit at the home of his friends, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (Luke 10:38-42). This passage is irritating if you’re a Martha-like person trying to keep a clean house, serve a good meal, and attend to the needs of guests. Martha is all that while her little sister sits enthralled at the feet of Jesus.

Jesus responds to Martha’s complaining with the equivalent of,



“*Stop your unnecessary activity, Martha! Look at what you’re missing! Listen to me now because I won’t always be with you.*”

We don’t know how Martha reacted to Jesus’ words. Many assume she felt reproved, but isn’t it just as possible that she felt a stunning sense of liberation? Perhaps she threw off her apron and said, “*Move over, Mary, I want to listen, too! We’ll eat leftovers!*”

Last week we heard the equally familiar parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). In response to the lawyer’s question, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus tells the story of the robbery victim and the people who pass him by, too busy with their own affairs

to stop and help. The one who does stop is a Samaritan. We may *know* that loving God and neighbor is what we need to gain eternal life, but our knowledge is worth little if we do not *practice* what we know.

I like to think that I’d be the Samaritan, but sadly, I am a Martha-ish person. I like to stick to my agenda. I make a plan for the day, and I don’t like it when childcare plans fall through or a friend calls who needs a ride to the doctor or...whatever.

When I remember, I try to treat an interruption as a message and ask, “What is it, Jesus? Show me where you are in this.” Often that’s just where I find him—in the interruptions—if I can just remember to *Stop! Look! Listen!*

***“Move over, Mary,  
I want to listen, too!  
We’ll eat leftovers!”***



*Loving God, we long to live simply.  
Our hearts, so filled with the many  
activities of the day, now stop  
to beg for your light and wisdom,  
so that we may be instruments  
of peace in our world. Amen.*

From *Prayers for Our Country*,  
by Deborah Meister and Paige Byrne Shortal

## WEEKDAY READINGS

July 18–23

**Monday, Weekday:**

Mi 6:1–4, 6–8 / Mt 12:38–42

**Tuesday, Weekday:**

Mi 7:14–15, 18–20 / Mt 12:46–50

**Wednesday, Weekday:**

Jer 1:1, 4–10 / Mt 13:1–9

**Thursday, Weekday:**

Jer 2:1–3, 7–8, 12–13 / Mt 13:10–17

**Friday, St. Mary Magdalene:**

Sg 3:1–4b or 2 Cor 5:14–17 /

Jn 20:1–2, 11–18

**Saturday, Weekday:**

Jer 7:1–11 / Mt 13:24–30

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