

Mary or Martha, Which are you more like? Do you choose the better part?

One day, a little girl is sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly notices that her mother has several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast to her brunette hair. She looks at her mother and inquisitively asks: "Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?"

Her mother replied: "Well, every time that you children do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, or I am stressed out, one of my hairs turns white."

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then asked: "Mumma, how come all of grandma's hairs are white?"

Sometimes the burdens of life, which for some include anxiety and stress, can lead to gray hair. In today's gospel, we have a lady named Martha, who probably has a few more gray hairs than Mary.

How many of us feel that we are closer to Martha? How many of us think that we are closer to Mary? How many who feel that we are more like Martha, want to be more like Mary in this story?

We all have many things in our lives to be concerned about and to worry about. We all try to accomplish so many things in our lives as most of us believe that if we just do one more thing, or purchase one more thing that it will make us happy and we will feel like we are more accomplished.

Then some of us may get upset because we see others who are not, in our opinion, doing their "fair share". We think that just because we are involved in doing so many things, that others should live up to our expectations of busyness as well, whether at home, at work or in our church.

When I myself look at this passage, I find myself being the true Martha as many of you would probably agree. In one of my reviews, going through the diaconate formation, I was constantly reminded that I must become more of a "be er" and less of a "do er".

I have worked at becoming more of a "contemplative" if you will and I find great peace in that when I do that. However, when I slow down to sit at the feet of Jesus, he puts even more ideas and thoughts in my head, but the difference is that what he shares with me helps me to point people towards him and build up his kingdom here on earth.

I know that it is hard for most of us to slow down a little and find time to just sit for a bit and focus on Jesus, for as he said today, that is the better part. Jesus does not scold Martha for

working too hard, in fact he uses a very friendly tone as he even repeats her name twice, Martha, Martha.

I know that in our world today, most of us feel that we have to compete in the “rat race” and of course, I always hear that I just don’t have time to sit down and spend some time in silent prayer and reflection and getting to know Jesus in a more intimate way.

Let me suggest to you a couple of things that you may want to consider trying this week. We make schedules for everything in our life, correct? Why not schedule some prayer time into our calendar. Block off 15 minutes in a day. You might say, “Deacon Jim, I am not sure if I have that time”. Let me make you aware that the average American spends 2 hours and 23 minutes per day on social media. The average teen spends 4 hours and 40 minutes a day on social media. After seeing those numbers, asking for a 15 minute time frame does not seem like to large of an ask, does it?

Better yet, put your phone on your counter and go take a 15-20 minute walk this week, maybe by yourself or with someone else and just reflect on how Jesus is walking with you in this life and maybe if you feel abandoned and are burdened by many tasks, ask Jesus to step in a little closer in His walk with you.

Are you up for the challenge? If you do accept, Jesus may also look at you and remind you that by spending time with him and not worrying about the task list, that you will have chosen the better part.

God’s Blessings, Deacon Jim

If I Would Just Have Taken the Time with Jesus (author unknown)

*He stands ever ready, with outstretched hand,
To guide steps, and help to understand.
His love, a constant, unchanging flame,
A desire, whispered softly, my name.*

*Yet, there is a rush through the days, too busy to pause,
Missing the peace, the joy, the divine cause.
Like Martha, distracted by many a task,
While Mary chose the better part, at His feet to bask.*

*Oh, to carve out the moments, to prioritize His call,
To still the spirit, and give Him all.
For time with my Savior, it's never a waste,
But a lifeline of strength, and eternal embrace.*