

16TH SUNDAY YEAR C



THE GOSPEL Luke 10:38-42

Jesus entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary.

Fussy Martha

readied the table,
cooked the meal,
poured fine wine.

Resting Mary

sat herself down at his feet.
The sound of his voice,
stilled her heart
and filled her soul.

O Jesus,
call us to rest at your feet and listen;
to share for a while with you
that one thing that is
necessary.

Let us feast on it, and then,
bustle about serving it
to others the rest
of our day.

THE FIRST READING Genesis 18:1-10a



Please do not go on past your servant.

Abraham cleansed
the feet of a
stranger.

God's
response:
a gift of life,
where
there was
no life
before.

His name was Isaac.

And
so it went:
friendship, covenant
between God and
all people
of all
times.

Lord, let us find you in all who pass by our door!
Let them be sacraments to us.
Please fill them with
your life.



THE SECOND READING: Colossians 1:24-28

I am a minister to bring to completion for you the word of God.

Christ,

let us
serve as your ministers.
Let us take the riches and glory of your love
to every part of your world,
to every person,
so all can know

that

“The world is charged with the grandeur of God
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil:
... Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”*

*Quotation from G.M. Hopkins, SJ, [God's Grandeur](#)

Today's Readings:

This Sunday's readings lead us to ponder the gift of hospitality; the giving and receiving we experience. May we learn to welcome our Lord who wishes to dwell with us.

In the **First Reading**, Abraham gives us the example of Bedouin hospitality. In welcoming three strangers, he welcomes his Lord and receives the good news that Sarah will conceive a son.

In the **Psalms** it is we who are invited to come into the Lord's presence. And what are our dispositions?

In the **Second Reading** from Colossians, Paul speaks of sharing in the sufferings of Christ. It is our choice to receive this message – that of Christ among us, the hope of our glory.

In the **Gospel**, the story of Martha and Mary, we learn of the importance of presence to the other, of stillness, of attentive listening, and of hospitality.

May we be aware this week of our attitude to others. Do we welcome them, do we listen ...?

Reflection. Xenophilia

Most dictionaries do not include the word “xenophilia” (love of strangers) in their listing because, unfortunately, there are few occasions in which the

word is used. They do admit “xenophobia” (fear of strangers) because this is something that many of us learn from an early age. Those who are different are strange, foreign, alien, and presumably hostile—and, therefore, best avoided.

How different is the attitude shown by Abraham, who begs the strangers to allow him to take care of them? And he goes to considerable trouble to make good his offer. However, the story does not end there. The strangers leave behind an incomparable gift for Abraham and Sarah: the promise of a son.

Real hospitality involves reciprocity: both parties give and both receive. Of the household in Bethany, one part gives (Martha), and one part receives (Mary). While Martha busies herself taking care of Jesus, he in turn takes care of Mary, feeding her with the warming words that flow from his mouth. Pope Francis is tireless in exhorting us to go out from our safe havens into the margins, to look for the stranger, the immigrant, and the poor and to take care of them. But the story does not end there. When we practice self-forgetful hospitality, we quickly discover that we also are its beneficiaries. Our care and loving concern are mysteriously and abundantly repaid by the One who was hungry and was fed by us.

If, at our funeral, we are lauded for our xenophilia, then our friends can be comfortably assured that in our lives we have passed the ultimate test, and now enjoy the hospitality of heaven.

