

### Gospel (Luke 10:38–42)

Now as Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

### Scripture Reflection

This week's gospel and last week's gospel highlight the balance that is needed if we are to maintain our focus and rhythm of life. In the previous gospel the lawyer is thrown into confusion by being challenged to accept all people as "my neighbour". In this week's gospel, Jesus turns society's norms upside down again.

Jesus was constantly calling into question the structures in society that kept people limited and bound in a particular "place". In Jesus' time it was not appropriate for a woman to be sitting at the feet of a teacher. That position was for a man. The role of the woman was subservient and women were considered unworthy. And yet here was Jesus encouraging Mary to stretch the boundaries; to sit and to listen to his teaching and to be captured by God's wisdom and love. Jesus tried to help Martha break free and let go of the expectations placed on her by her culture.

A question for each of us would be how do I let the culture of my time keep me locked into materialistic or shallow expectations? Do I have the courage to stand against the common perceptions/expectations; "everyone's got one" or "everybody is part of it?"

### Pilgrimage: a journey of hospitality

Pilgrimage is hard work! The journey in faith is at times long and tiring. But the pilgrim does not travel alone; there are many along the way who give consolation, and who provide places and spaces for rest. Others can be the traveller's eyes and ears, and sometimes even feet, along the road of faith.

Jesus is always ready to welcome those are travelling; Jesus puts on his apron, sits the traveller down, and waits upon the weary. To be hopeful in the journey of faith is to be one who is openly expectant of God's loving and nourishing presence.

### Pope Quote

"The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, on the other hand, is proper to the lay faithful. As citizens of the State, they are called to take part in public life in a personal capacity. So they cannot relinquish their participation 'in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good.' The mission of the lay faithful is therefore to configure social life correctly, respecting its legitimate autonomy and cooperating with other citizens according to their respective competences and fulfilling their own responsibility. Even if the specific expressions of ecclesial charity can never be confused with the activity of the State, it still remains true that charity must animate the entire lives of the lay faithful and therefore also their political activity, lived as 'social charity'."

Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est (God is Love), #29

## WYD Action

This week make an effort to take your projects, discussions and issues and sit at the feet of the Lord. Take time before a meeting in your workplace, discussion in your classroom or even your efforts on the sporting field, to reflect on the task ahead and personally invite Jesus to be a part of your journey.

Reflection time can be as simple as taking 2 or 3 minutes of silence to prepare for the task ahead, or it may involve inviting those gathered time to read and reflect on a significant article, poem, speech or reading.

Although not everyone in your community may consider themselves 'religious', creating a space in which the Spirit can move, may inspire a new approach, a new direction, new ways of communicating or it may just affirm your present course. Allowing this time for peace may also offer an opportunity to develop relationships and possibly the chance to share your faith journey with someone.

Individually, be sure to take some time everyday this week to stop for at least 10min. Turn the TV or music off and sit; go for a walk in silence, journal your thoughts and ideas from the day, run, swim, cycle, etc.

## WYD Cross and Icon

In 1984, at the Holy Year of Redemption celebrations, more than 300,000 young people from all over the world had taken up the Pope's invitation to come to Rome for the Palm Sunday. Even then finding accommodation was a major logistical challenge. When Rome's city authority decided at short notice to forbid the planned construction of a gigantic tent site for the guests, 6,000 families spontaneously came forward with offers to put up the young people in their own houses. Along with the many bishops who engaged the young people in discussion, Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Br. Roger, the founder of the Taizé Community, also came to the event. In the Colosseum young people prayed the Stations of the Cross, while

in St. Peter's Basilica the Eucharist was celebrated. Overwhelmed by the response, the Pope called out to the young crowd:

What a fantastic spectacle is presented on this stage by your gathering here today! Who claimed that today's youth has lost their sense of values? Is it really true that they cannot be counted on?

It was in this context, borne out of deep conviction that young people could be relied upon and that young people would shoulder the task of being faithful builders of a new civilization of love and truth and a culture of life and hope, that John Paul II entrusted to them the central symbol of their faith, the Cross - the "World Youth Day Cross".

Taken from the WYD 2008 website: [www.wyd2008.org](http://www.wyd2008.org)



## Ritual and Prayer

### Preparation

Establish a prayer focus incorporating:

- coloured material
- an open bible
- a candle
- a large sea shell (the kind in which you can hear the ocean)
- a large bowl filled with water and a large towel.

### Ritual

Invite the group to gather around the prayer focus. Pass the large shell around the group and invite members to listen to the sound of the ocean.

Encourage participants to use this time as an opportunity to reflect upon the fact that we can miss the special things if we don't take closer notice, stop what we're doing, and listen. What are the special things that you sometimes miss out on, just because you're not really seeing, or listening? Read the scripture to the group gathered. Invite the group to spend time in reflection. Invite group members to move to the water bowl and wash the hands of the person beside them as an opportunity to silently extend hospitality and affirm each other. Once completed, the group prays the final prayer together.

### Prayer

Listening God,

Help us not to be distracted by those things that worry us. You invite us to leave those things in your care.

Help us to focus not on the material things in our lives, but on our relationship with you, God. You invite us to sit in your presence.

Help us not to be narrow-minded about others' opinions, ideas and beliefs. Encourage us to listen with open minds and hearts. You invite us to be in close relationship with others.

Help us to open our eyes, ears, minds, hearts, souls, hands and feet to the words of others and to the words of God. You invite us to live a life of love.

Jesus you were welcomed into the home of Mary and Martha, so let us open our hearts to you.

Amen



## Sacred Places

Take time out from your busy life to make a sacred space where you can reflect on your life each week. This place is your sacred place where you can come and not be disturbed while you reflect on your life in the presence of God.

- What has been revealed during this time of reflection?
- How have I allowed God to minister to me this week?
- Where have I encountered God in the 'traveller'?
- How can I be hospitable to those I encounter?
- How will I respond to God's call this week?