

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

See, I have God for my help.
The Lord sustains my soul.
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart,
and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants
and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace,
that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity,
they may be ever watchful in keeping your
commands.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Gen 18:1-10

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord appeared to Abraham at the Oak of Mamre while he was sitting by the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up, and there he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them, and bowed to the ground. 'My lord,' he said 'I beg you, if I find favour with you, kindly do not pass your servant by. A little water shall be brought; you shall wash your feet and lie down under the tree. Let me fetch a little bread and you shall refresh yourselves before going further. That is why you have come in your servant's direction.' They replied, 'Do as you say.'

Abraham hastened to the tent to find Sarah.' 'Hurry,' he said 'knead three bushels of flour and make loaves.' Then running to the cattle Abraham took a fine and tender calf and gave it to the servant, who hurried to prepare it. Then taking cream, milk and the calf he had prepared, he laid all before them, and they ate while he remained standing near them under the tree. 'Where is your wife Sarah?' they asked him. 'She is in the tent' he replied. Then his guest said, 'I shall visit you again next year without fail and your wife will then have a son.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 14 (15):2-5

Response:

The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

1. Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?
He who walks without fault;
he who acts with justice
and speaks the truth from his heart;
he who does not slander with his tongue.
(R.)
2. He who does no wrong to his brother,
who casts no slur on his neighbour,
who holds the godless in disdain,
but honours those who fear the Lord. (R.)
3. He who keeps his pledge, come what may;
who takes no interest on a loan
and accepts no bribes against the innocent.
Such a man will stand firm for ever. (R.)

SECOND READING

Col 1:24-28

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

It makes me happy to suffer for you, as I am suffering now, and in my body to do what I can to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church. I became the servant of the Church when God made me responsible for delivering God's message to you, the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries and has now been revealed to his saints. It was God's purpose to reveal it to them and to show all the rich glory of this mystery to pagans. The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory: this is the Christ we proclaim, this is the wisdom in which we thoroughly train everyone and instruct everyone, to make them all perfect in Christ.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 10:38-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha who was distracted with all the serving said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered: 'Martha, Martha,' he said 'you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part; it is not to be taken from her.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,

born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice
brought to completion varied offerings of the
law,
accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful
servants
and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel,
so that what each has offered to the honour of
your majesty
may benefit the salvation of all.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful,
has made a memorial of his wonders;
he gives food to those who fear him.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Graciously be present to your people, we pray,
O Lord,
and lead those you have imbued with heavenly
mysteries
to pass from former ways to newness of life.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

I often think of the film, Babette's Feast, when
a well-served meal brought together a divided
group in mutual love and forgiveness. I also
think of a saying in the film that the only thing
we can take with us when we die is what we
have given away. May the good God help
us in the coming week to live what we have
celebrated here together.

Fr Sean Kealy CSSp

SundayMessage

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 20 July 2025 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 4

A WOMAN'S PLACE

LK 10:38-42

Some years ago, a lay woman was invited to lead the singing at a big annual novena in a Redemptorist church. It meant that at one or more of the sessions each day she would climb into the pulpit and lead the congregational singing. She is an excellent singer and leads the congregation superbly.

But there was a problem. Some of those attending the novena were not happy with this development and phoned the monastery to express their displeasure. Redemptorist priests and brothers had traditionally led the singing at this event, and that's how these people wanted it to remain. They didn't want a lay person - and certainly not a woman - filling that role.

A woman leading the congregation in song at a Eucharist or novena isn't new or radical, but when something as minor as this can be such a big deal for some Catholics, it shows just how sensitive is the whole issue of women in ministry in the church.

It's something that is explored in today's Gospel story of the sisters, Martha and Mary. Martha is the organiser. She bustles around preparing a meal for their guests. Feeding at least 13 men with big appetites after a day on the road would set a challenge to the best housekeeper. There is no doubting her frustration when she looks around for her sister to give her a hand and finds she is sitting among the men instead.

In her frustration, Martha does something that could be considered bad manners. She involves the guest of honour in a family dispute. Jesus' reply is intended to appease her. Note the repetition of her name and the praise of her bustling around.

Some experts interpret Jesus' statement that Mary has chosen the better part as praise for the value of the contemplative life of prayer over the active life.

Another view is that the story reflects both the situation of women both in the life of Jesus and in the early church. The key to it is in the first words we hear about Mary: 'she was sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to him speaking.' 'Sitting at the feet' of a teacher was a technical phrase for becoming a disciple of a rabbi. Mary, like other women followers of Jesus, has chosen to become a disciple, and the first duty of a disciple is to learn from the teacher, to sit at his feet.

This story is telling us that Jesus welcomed the discipleship of women. He didn't send them off to the kitchen or expect them to stay in their place apart from the male disciples. Luke may have included it in his Gospel as a reminder that women's place in the church should not be confined to making and serving meals. Like the men, they are called first and foremost to be disciples, to sit at the feet of the Lord and to listen to the Word. This is the better part, and it mustn't be taken from them. ■

REFLECT

Today's Gospel challenges us - and the church - to think about the role of women. Women hold many ministries in the church - catechists, teachers, parish sisters, liturgists, musicians, singers, readers, servers, Eucharistic Ministers, theologians, students of theology - but many still feel as if they are relegated to the kitchen while men make all the big decisions. They feel like modern Marthas. The Catholic Church is a male-dominated institution, and it is extremely difficult for women - and indeed for laymen - to have any real say in it or exercise any real authority. That will always be the case as long as power is bound up with ordination rather than with baptism.

As you reflect on today's Gospel, recall the women whose discipleship of Christ has made your discipleship possible. How might our church make the best use of the gifts and talents of its female members? ■

SAY

"Lord, help me to take the time to listen attentively to you."

DO

Look at your work/life balance, your daily routine. Are you working too hard? Are you too busy? Do you allow for what is important in life? Reflect also on your treatment of others. Is it fair?

LEARN

As disciples of Jesus, we must strive for the quiet, listening attentiveness of the student. We need time and quiet to read and ponder the scriptures, to pray to reflect on the direction in which our lives are going. We also need the energy to work for the kingdom of God, whether it is in our professional life or in the generosity of offering our time and talents for the sake of our neighbour. In other words, we need to be both Martha and Mary.

PRAY

Ask the Lord to help you to have a deeper awareness of the needs of those around you.