

**THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

“Martha, Martha you are upset and anxious about many things; Mary has chosen the better part and she will not be deprived of it. “

My mother really did not like this gospel. He always felt that Martha got a bad rap and that Mary was basically good for nothing when it came to helping out around the kitchen. I remember that her funeral actually fell on the date of the feast of Saint Martha and I mentioned in the homily that my mother was just feisty enough to bring it to the lord’s attention once she settled in.

Well, here’s the thing. In this little story Martha doesn’t come off too well. She puts Jesus on the spot as she “invites” him to “take her side.” Jesus isn’t going to take sides. He will not let someone put him into such a situation. He sees what is going on. He sees all that Martha has to do. He can sense that she needs help. But she isn’t going about it the right way and as a guest and a friend he is not going to correct Mary.

This is a little skirmish. But Martha is a saint. Martha lives in the kingdom of God. She and her sister—and Lazarus too. Saints. But she is a saint for a different reason and in a different way than Mary. And that is the point. Be the saint the Lord wants you to be. Keep your eyes on the Lord not what others around you are or are not doing. This world moves because of the Martha’s in it. Jesus knew that. He chose all those women as his disciples and all those men who always make the time to reach out a helping hand.

I think of our parish and all the Martha’s who make it go—on the parish commissions, on Core team, on the Pastoral Council, on the hospitality Commission, on the Baking Committee, on the RCIA, who provide all those casseroles to help feed the homeless men at Saint John Villa, or those who are involved in Meals for the Homebound. I think of how our Mexican Catholics feed the parish on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I think of all the Eucharistic Ministers who bring communion to the homebound and shut-ins. Or who minister at the table of the Lord. There are Martha’s everywhere and they make the world go round. Don’t let this little moment lead you to think Jesus does not appreciate the role of the Martha. His mother was one—and still is: Big time.