



CELEBRATING AT HOME

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

True hospitality (Luke 10:38-42)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,

you are the living Word of God.

Lord Jesus,

you are God's hospitality at work in us.

Lord Jesus,

you are our hope and our joy.

Scripture Reading (Luke 10:38-42)

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 all 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.'

Reflection - *True hospitality*

Preparing food for a special occasion or a valued guest can be a daunting task. These days, it can also be filled with all sorts of traps as food preferences continue to change and various allergies appear.

In the story which Luke tells in this Gospel, it is obvious that Martha has gone to a great deal of trouble to welcome and provide for Jesus, the guest.

Pre-occupied with the serving and annoyed with Mary passively sitting at Jesus' feet, Martha's anxiety gets the better of her and she asks Jesus to intervene.

In a way, Martha is like a well-intentioned host who prepares a full dinner of roast meat only to find that the guest is vegetarian! Perhaps true hospitality might have found that out before the meal was prepared. Perhaps true hospitality might have thought about what the guest has to offer, not only about what the host wants to provide.

So often in the Gospels the initial roles in a story get reversed. In this Gospel it seems that Jesus, the guest, has something to offer that Martha overlooks, but Mary recognises. Jesus becomes the host. And it is he who ends up doing the 'feeding', not Martha.

And, what of Mary? Apparently lost in listening to Jesus and oblivious to Martha's need for help? It seems all wrong to us that Jesus praises her for choosing 'the better part'. Jesus refuses to send Mary back to the kitchen. His reply can also be read as an invitation for Martha to leave her lavish preparations and to join them.

True hospitality for the disciple lies in getting to know and spending time with the Guest.

The position of this story in Luke's Gospel, sandwiched between the parable of the Good Samaritan (the ideal disciple) and Jesus' teaching about prayer, could suggest that both are needed – deep attention to the Word of God and robust action: hearing *and* doing the Word.

It could also suggest that hearing the Word comes first, followed by doing the Word in works of service. It may also suggest the importance of paying attention to making the right choice at any given moment – not to be so caught up in doing even good works that we forget to nourish our relationship with Jesus.

What it does clearly show, however, is that both men and women are called to discipleship.

Mary, the more marginalised figure in the story, offers the kind of hospitality that Jesus wants in a disciple: an open and listening heart.

Prayers of Intercession

May your whole Church

be the living sign of your friendship with us.

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Help us to recognise your presence
in the people and situations of our daily lives.

Keep us strong in our commitment
as we face the challenges of faith and life.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.**

Thy kingdom come.

**Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses**

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

In your everlasting kindness,
Lord, our God,
touch us with your love,
that we may be your hospitality and welcome
in the world,
now and always,
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
carry us gently through the week ahead.
Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
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