

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS

In those days:

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.

He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him.

When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, ‘O Lord, if I have found favour in your sight, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on — since you have come to your servant.’

So they said, ‘Do as you have said.’

And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, ‘Quick! Three measures of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes.’

And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly.

Then he took curds and milk, and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them.

And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, ‘Where is Sarah your wife?’

And he said, ‘She is in the tent.’

The LORD said, ‘I will surely return to you about this time next year and Sarah your wife shall have a son.’

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS:

O Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?

Whoever walks without fault;
who does what is righteous,
and speaks the truth from his heart;
whoever does not slander with his tongue.

O Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?

Who does no wrong to a neighbour,
who casts no slur on a friend,
who looks with scorn on the wicked,
but honours those who fear the Lord.

O Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?

Who lends no money at interest,
and accepts no bribes against the innocent.
Such a one shall never be shaken.

O Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?

THE SECOND READING IS FROM THE LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

Brothers and Sisters:

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body — that is, the Church — of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known — the mystery hidden for ages and generations, but now revealed to his saints.

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are those who hold fast to the word of God
in an honest and good heart,
and bear fruit with patience.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO LUKE

At that time:

Jesus entered a village.

And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and
listened to his teaching.

But Martha was distracted with much serving.

And she went up to him and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my
sister has left me to serve alone?

Tell her then to help me.'

But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and
troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary.

Mary has chosen the good portion,
which will not be taken away from her.'

The Gospel of the Lord

THE REFLECTION

The first reading gives an example of hospitality, Abraham greeting his unnamed visitors and in the Gospel Martha greets Jesus and welcomes him to her house. Mary intends to stay and listen to every word Jesus is saying, not making any attempt to help Martha and probably fascinated by Jesus' words.

In answer to Martha, Jesus says Mary has chosen the better choice, to listen and focus on Jesus's words. He brings the fulness of God's message, a radical change whereas Martha seems content to stay with her role as hospitable hostess, as the tradition suggests for a woman who is head of the household.

Jesus is telling her and us to see the riches of God's message, the perfecting of the teaching given in the Old Testament through the 10 commandments. Mary will hear and understand this, Martha will miss the message of God from his Son. Mary has made the good or better choice.

There are things I found impossible, learning to swim or to drive a car but eventually realised I could, a greater world opened up. Jesus' teaching is that of a better wholeness, being able to see the full picture, greater than our own worldly view. Gods plan looked tough for his chosen people, Jesus' teaching is to expect answers in the world to come in his kingdom, the Kingdom of God. This is so different from what we live in now. The gospels keep telling us we do not get there by our own merits but it is a free gift to be received like a little child receives love hugs and comfort in their lives.

I think Martha's faith in Jesus does grow as she hears his message, she greets him with words of faith after Lazarus has died, sure that Jesus could have cured him. Jesus does something better, he restores Lazarus to life again.

Mary was right because she wanted to hear Jesus before doing anything, That priority is part of our lives, to listen and reflect on his teaching as often as we do to strengthen our hope and give us balance in our lives.

