

OT XVI © Sunday Homily > July 20th, 2025

Today's readings center around two powerful Christian virtues: *hospitality* and *listening*. But the deeper message goes further - it is about setting our priorities right. The Gospel challenges us to ask: In our busy lives, where does Jesus fit in?

In the first reading from Genesis, we see Abraham and Sarah welcoming three strangers with warm hospitality. Their openness becomes a divine encounter - those "strangers" are actually messengers from God. Because of their generosity and welcome, they receive the promise of a son, Isaac. This reminds us that hospitality is holy - it creates space for God to act in our lives, often in surprising ways.

The Gospel takes us to the house of Martha and Mary. Martha is busy - rushing, preparing, serving. Mary, on the other hand, simply sits at Jesus' feet, listening to His words. And when Martha complains, Jesus gently reminds her, "*Mary has chosen the better part.*"

Now Jesus isn't scolding Martha for serving. He values service - remember, He washed His disciples' feet. But He's pointing out something essential: before we serve, we must *listen*. Before we act, we must *pray*. We cannot give what we do not have. The heart of Christian life is not just *doing* for God - it is *being* with God.

St. Paul, in today's second reading, speaks of the mystery of Christ. He says his mission is to make that mystery known. But how can we welcome Christ's mystery into our hearts unless we spend time with Him in silence, in prayer, in Scripture?

So what implication does for us today?

First, we need to recharge our spiritual batteries. It's not enough to do good things. We must stay rooted in prayer - personal prayer, family prayer, time with Scripture, and especially the Eucharist. These are the quiet moments when we sit at the feet of Jesus and let Him speak to our hearts.

Second, our Church needs both Marthas and Marys. We need the "Marthas" who serve - those who clean the church, teach our children, visit the sick, and organize parish events. But we also need "Marys" - those who bring the gift of silence, reflection, and prayer. We must not choose between the two. We must become both: listening Marys and serving Marthas.

Finally, we need to listen well - not only to God but to one another. In our families, marriages, and workplaces, listening is an act of love. It says: *You matter. You are worth my time.* Let's not become so busy that we stop hearing each other.

So, this week, I invite you to ask: *Have I made space to sit at the feet of Jesus? Have I welcomed His word into my life before rushing off to serve others?* May our hospitality begin not only with what we do - but with how well we listen, to God and to one another.