



Essential Evangelization

The Art of Listening

Are you a Martha or Mary? In today's Gospel message we hear a very down to earth tale of two sisters. One who is interested in getting the house and food ready for their very honored guest. The other sister is either oblivious or not too interested in pitching in. Her only interest is in "the guest." At a recent women's conference, 99% of women identified more with the role of Martha. Before we sell Martha short however, we need to uphold and thank the Martha's of the world. They are those action oriented very responsible people who take their jobs seriously and get the job done. Without them, we would all be in bad shape. And so it is with our Church. We have great leaders in every facet of ministry that are always there to count on and complete the job. They are the A-Teams of Worship, Christian Service, Office Staff, Youth, Music Ministry, etc. We would not survive very long without the Martha's of the world!

But there is a deeper moral to this story. You see, the Martha's of the world are often times so busy and distracted that they may not take the time to listen. And in some cases, it is the very important voice of God they miss. The very presence of the Savior of the World in her living room, and Martha was more worried about cooking and cleaning!

Listening should always precede action. Jesus never said be doers and then hearers of the Word! Jesus lays out the right sequence that works so well in Christian discipleship, human love, and even business management. Can we be better listeners of our friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, customers and of our God? We cannot have an intimate relationship without listening; in our marriage, in our families, in our work, and in our relationship with Christ. Listening is caring. When we listen, we love. It is a gift of self to the other person. It is living in the moment. And the more we really listen, the deeper and more meaningful the relationship. How well do we listen?

*This is one of a series of articles
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