

## Sunday, July 17, 2022 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

### First Reading: Genesis 18:1-14

1-2 - The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. He ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground.

3-5 - He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on."

8 - (Abraham) took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them.

10 - Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him.

11-14 - Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. So Sarah laughed to herself. The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?"

*Is there something that God has promised that you doubt because you think it would be "too wonderful for the Lord"?*

Hebrews 11: 11 - By faith (Abraham) received power of procreation, even though he was too old - and Sarah herself was barren - because he considered him faithful who had promised.

*Do you consider God to be faithful to do what He has promised?*

Genesis 21: 5-6 - Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Now Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me."

*As the years passed, Abraham and Sarah must have lost some of their laughter.*

*With the birth of Isaac, God gave Abraham and Sarah their laughter back.*

*Does God want you to laugh?*

*How do you feel when your children/grandchildren laugh? How does God feel when you laugh?*

*If you have lost your laughter, does God want to give you your laughter back?*

### Second Reading: Colossians 1:15-28

*July 17 - 1:15-28 - Who Jesus is*

*July 24 - 2:6-19 - What Jesus did*

*July 31 - 3:1-11 - Therefore how should I respond - how should I live*

15 - He is the image of the invisible God.

16 - In him all things in heaven and on earth were created, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

17 - He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

18 - He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

19 - In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

## **Gospel: Luke 10:38-42**

Martha had the gift of hospitality. She was a real doer, a take-charge, task-oriented, get-it-done kind of a person. I personally would really enjoy going over to Martha's house for dinner, and every church would like to have Martha as a member. But in this story Martha made five major mistakes.

### **1. She became distracted**

Her welcome became wearisome; her service became slavery.

Her service to God kept her from God and kept her from hearing God's voice.

She shifted her focus away from God to all the things she was doing for God.

The voice of the tyranny of the urgent – all those things that always demand to be done – drowned out the voice of Jesus.

### **2. She became worried**

"Martha, Martha, you are distracted and worried about so many things."

But how could someone be worried about so many things in the presence of the one who takes care of everything – who calms the storm, casts out demons, heals the sick, and multiplies food?

The New Testament word for "worry" literally means to be torn in two.

What could be so important that it would be worth being torn in two about?

What had begun as well-meaning and supposedly necessary household tasks had become a demanding taskmaster.

### **3. She became bothered**

Martha is experiencing growing agitation and mounting frustration, which is showing itself in the pace and noise level of everything she is doing.

What had begun as distraction over many little things is now threatening to disrupt everything – including Martha's relationship not only with her sister but also with her Lord.

### **4. She began blaming**

"Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all of this work by myself?"

We dig ourselves into a hole, get ourselves into a frenzy, and then cry out, "Lord, do you not care about all that is happening to me? Why are you allowing this? Lord, do you love me?"

### **5. She became demanding**

"Lord, if you care, then you must agree with me. Tell her to come in here and help me."

For Martha the solution is obvious. Mary needs to get up, get in here, and help. After all, Mary is the cause of all of my anxiety and frustration.

It is amazing how we can become so critical and so demanding as to think that we know best what everybody else should do.

But Jesus knows that there is something far more important that needs to happen – not in the kitchen, but in Martha.

What would have happened if Martha had gotten her way? Instead of being poor Martha, it would have been poor Mary. Mary would have been pulled away from the ministry of the Master, who is in control of all things, into the ministry of Martha who is worried and upset over many things. Martha's solution would have become Mary's problem.

But what would have happened if Martha had taken a little time to listen to the Lord, and then gotten up, made a few preparations, perhaps served a less than perfect meal, but served that meal with a calm heart? She would have taught us not to make the above five mistakes, and she would have shown us – every day and in every situation – how to choose the better part – the part will never be taken away from us.