

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**  
**20 July, 2025**  
**Luke 10:38-42**

### **Catechist Background**

Today's Gospel reading follows immediately after last Sunday's Gospel reading, (both of which come from Luke's Gospel). It provides a counterbalance to Jesus' answer to the "lawyer's" question. Loving other people through our service is important, as in last week's example of the Samaritan and this week's example of Martha; but loving God and listening to God's Word is more important. Doing good works must be accompanied by spending time with God. So, in a way, Mary in today's Gospel reading is seen not only in contrast with her sister, Martha, but also with the "lawyer" from last week as he already knew God's Word (or assumed he did) but he did not know how to put it in to practice.

One point that modern readers may miss is how unusual it would have been for either Mary or Martha, as women, to be listening to Jesus in their world which was strictly segregated by gender. It seems likely that Mary would have been sitting in (or even encroaching into) the 'men's space,' listening to a charismatic rabbi, while Martha busied herself with the culturally accepted norms of hospitality as given by women. In understanding this story, we also should not undervalue the importance of Martha's work – hospitality was an extremely important aspect of everyday life at that time and thus very worthwhile, but Jesus clearly felt it should not necessarily take precedence over spending time with him. This applies to us today: cultivating a life of prayer is not something only for 'other people' or for 'professionals,' but it is a central part of Christian life for everyone.

### **Setting the Scene**

For the activity described below, you will need a banner with the words 'Listen to Jesus' on it, and materials to decorate the banner. Depending on the size of your group, you could use an A1 piece of paper or a large cloth for your banner.

### **We Say Sorry**

*Leader:* You are our Teacher, Lord have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You are our Messiah, Christ have mercy.

*All:* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You heal us from our sins, Lord have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

### **Gloria**

### **We Pray (1)**

Lord, make us always willing and happy to serve you with a loving heart. Amen.

### **Gospel Intro**

Explain that in Biblical times, there were certain rules about what men could do, what women could do, and what children could do. It wouldn't have been normal for women or children to hang around while the men discussed things, so the scene in today's Gospel reading is unusual.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

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

## Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- What was Mary doing in this Gospel reading?
- What was Martha doing in this story?
- Why was Martha annoyed with Mary?
- What did Jesus say about this?
- Why do you think Jesus said that Mary had chosen the better activity?

## Response

- Sometimes we think that it is more important for other types of people to pray and to know how to listen to God than it is for us to do so.
- What sort of people know how to listen to Jesus and to pray to him?
  - Priests? Nuns? Headteachers? Parents? Adults?
  - Should we try to pray too?
- YES: it is important for **all** of us to pray, including children!  
But:
- Jesus is not with us in the same way that he was in Martha and Mary's house.
- How can we listen to Jesus in our time? (Answers might include: hearing Bible stories; thinking about how Jesus wants us to live; asking our parents, teachers, catechists or priests what they think Jesus teaches us; trying to be people who act in a kind and loving way.)
- Encourage the children to decorate one big banner with the words 'Listen to Jesus' on it.
- You might consider processing in with the banner at the offertory.

## We Believe

Relating the Creed to what you have shared with the children, ask these questions and invite the children to reply: 'I do'.

- Do you believe in God the Father, who has made everything?
- Do you believe in God the Son, Jesus, who teaches us how to follow God?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who helps us to pray?

## We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'God wants us to spend time talking with him and so we now pray...'

*Leader:* We pray for leaders in our Church, that they may always be open to what Jesus asks of us. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for politicians, that they make laws that help all people, but especially those who do not have anyone to help them. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for people who have not heard of Jesus. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for people we know who are lonely and want to spend time with others. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Lord, we know you listen to us. Help us listen to you, and do what you ask. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

*All:* **Amen.**

