

www.sjti.ac.za/resources_homily.htm

First Reading: Genesis 18:1-10
Response: “*Lord, who shall be admitted to your tent?*” (Ps. 14:1)
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 14:2-5
Second Reading: Colossians 1:24-28
Gospel: Luke 18:38-42

The mystery of today’s celebration is Christ among us as our friend. We welcome him as Abraham welcomed the Lord at Mamre, and Martha and Mary welcomed Christ at Bethany. (The Sunday Missal. Collins Liturgical. London. 1992. p.664).

We see God coming down, as three men, to be a guest of human beings when “*the Lord appears to Abraham*” (Gn. 18:1). Could it be a sign of the Incarnation? Abraham welcomes the Lord and asks him, “*Do not pass by*” (Gn. 18:3). God says “*Do as you say*” (Gn. 18:5).

Abraham and Sarah entertained God as a friend and God makes them a promise. “*I shall visit you again next year and your wife will then have a son*” (Gen.18:10).

In Abraham we see a human welcome for God. In Psalm 14, an entrance hymn, expresses a divine welcome of people into the house of God. “*Lord, who shall be admitted to your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy mountain?*” (Ps.14:1).

The psalm reminds us of the conditions necessary for divine entry. It is one “*who walks without fault and speaks the truth and does no wrong to his neighbour. Such a person will stand firm for ever*” (Ps. 14:2,3,5).

Even far from home or the sanctuary of God, one can still be close to God. Paul rejoices that even in prison, he can be part of the “*mystery hidden for centuries has now been revealed to God’s saints*” (Col. 1:26). He makes up for what still has to be done in Christ..

It does not mean Christ’s suffering is inadequate to save us but apostolic suffering as well is unavoidable in proclaiming Good News to others. Paul proclaims that, “*the mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory*” (Col. 1: 27).

Jesus visits his friends and “*Martha welcomed Jesus into her house*” (Lk. 10:38). She concerned herself with serving the Lord her way rather than what the Lord wanted. She complains that her sister, whose name she won’t mention, doesn’t help her.

Jesus, on the other hand, gently repeats Martha’s name, “*Martha, Martha, you worry about so many things, yet few are needed, only one*” (Lk. 10:41). If she could, like Mary, sit at Jesus’ feet and listen to his Word. “*Mary has chosen the better part*” (Lk. 10:42).

Read and share the Gospel today (Lk. 10:38-42), portraying Jesus’ visit to Martha and Mary.

In the Eucharist we serve the Lord (Offertory) and the Lord serves us (Holy Communion).

Teaching of Church shows our faith is action and contemplation, *ora et labora*.

Christian Witness means showing love for God and neighbour through prayer and service.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Bible: Discuss with the children what Jesus says to Martha. *What is Martha doing? What is Mary doing?*

Worship: *How do we serve the Lord at Mass? How does the Lord serve us?*

Teaching: Teach children how to pray, love and serve the Lord.

Witness: Make time every day to be with the Lord in prayer and learn to hear his word.

FOR TEENAGERS (*Shared Christian Praxis*)

Name the Present Action: *What does friendship with God mean to you?*

Your Story and Vision: Describe your relationship with God, with Jesus Christ.

Church's Story and Vision: *Share the Church's experience of human/divine relationships.*

Yours and Church's Vision: Seek ways of how to deepen your relationship with God and work with Him in the building of His Kingdom.

RCIA

Like Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden, like Abraham and Sarah, we can walk and talk with the Lord. Jesus today is in our midst, even as he was with his apostles and visited Martha and Mary. We are born to have a relationship with God and with neighbour, being created in God's own image and likeness. Even the ancient Greeks said, "the hand of God directs me." (i)

(i) **SOPHOCLES. The Theban Plays:** Oedipus at Colonus. Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, U.K.1972. p.118

LIFE EXPERIENCE

A certain priest visited a family and felt insulted because he was not invited in. He labelled her a racist because, in apartheid terms, she was White and he was Black. In actual fact, she thought he was simply a man of the road and housebreaking is prevalent in the new South Africa. Furthermore, he betrayed nothing recognizably religious about himself. It can certainly be a problem with some of our new priests, whom we hardly know, and even come to our presbyteries, confusing our staff by manner of their dress and behaviour. One came to my place in shorts almost as short as a bikini and shirt unbuttoned, displaying his chest. I had to tell him that if he dresses as he likes in his house, he was not free to do so in mine. It was not just a matter of not giving witness, he was in fact giving scandal to my staff. I suppose he would brand me as racist as well, regardless of the fact that in apartheid terms, I am also a non-White. Racism should not confuse freedom with licence to do as you please. The Catholic Church has one and the same rules for all the children of God. They are to edify one another, give witness to the world, show mutual respect and hospitality as shown by God and Abraham. "You created me on fire..teach me to live enflamed; to touch, not extinguish, the spark of the other." (i)

(i) **WEAKLAND** Rembert, OSB. 'A Pilgrim in a Pilgrim Church.' Eerdmans, Cambridge, U.K. 2009. p.196.

LITTLE ANGELINA

Angelina was reading a spiritual book, the life of St. John Bosco. She often stopped to ask questions or the meaning of a word. The interest was created by her father who had explained how St. John Bosco welcomed children. Her father had said some things that encouraged and inspired her. Adults sharing with children can arouse their interest in things.

IMPORTANT WORD: *Hospitality*

Strangers visit Abraham and he recognizes them to be divine. He invites God into his tent. Similarly, Martha and Mary welcome Jesus. Martha gets down to serving what she considers the Lord's needs. Jesus teaches her to set priorities. Mary, on the other hand, like Abraham, is listening to the Lord which is important, even more than working. Hospitality is a wonderful thing. It can show how much time we have for neighbour and for God. He is not to be outdone in love and service. He rewards with blessings a hundredfold.

Watchword: “*Mary has chosen the better part*” (Luke 10:42)

Hebrew: מרים בחרה לה החלק הטוב

Miryam baḥarah lah haḥeleq hatov.

Greek: Μαριαμ γαρ την αγαθην μεριδα εξελεξατο.

Mariam gar ten agathen merida ekseleksato.

Latin: **María optimam partem elegit.**

Spanish: **María ha escogido la Buena parte.**

Portuguese: **María escolheu a boa parte.**

French: **Marie a choisi la meilleure part.**

German: **María hat das gute Teil erwählt.**

Afrikaans: **María het die beste deel gekies.**

Zulu: **UMaría uzikhethela isabelo esihle kakhulu.**

Xhosa: **UMaría unyule loo nto ilungileyo.**

Sotho: **María o ikgethetse se molemo.**

Irish: **Oir is i an phairt is fear ba rogha le Maire.**