



AMDG
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME
YEAR C
21ST JULY 2019



‘Welcome, Lord!’

OPENING PRAYER

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants
that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity,
they may be ever watchful
in keeping your commands.

Our readings and prayers this week may lead us to open our hearts to Christ, our welcome guest. May he increase our faith and our love, so that we may see him amongst us as our friend.

In our *First Reading* from Genesis, Abraham gives us the wonderful example of Bedouin hospitality. Nothing is too good for the stranger, and Abraham does not hesitate to offer comfort and food because he recognises God in them. God rewards him with the promise of a son.

The well-known *Gospel* story of Martha and Mary shows us Jesus himself as the guest, welcomed into their home where they receive from him as well as give to him.

In the *Psalm*, it is we who are the guests in the Lord’s house. What readiness might we have to dwell in his house?

St Paul, sharing in Christ’s suffering, is proclaiming God’s message to the Colossians. As we hear ‘the mystery of Christ among us’, may we welcome him, ‘our hope of glory’. (*Second Reading*)

May we also welcome God’s word this week and ponder it.

FIRST READING GENESIS 18: 1–10

The Lord appeared to Abraham at the Oak of Mamre while he was sitting by the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up, and there he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them, and bowed to the ground. ‘My lord,’ he said, ‘I beg you, if I find favour with you, kindly do not pass your servant by. A little water shall be brought; you shall wash your feet and lie down under the tree. Let me fetch a little bread and you shall refresh yourselves before going further. That is why you have come in your servant’s direction.’ They replied, ‘Do as you say.’ Abraham hastened to the tent to find Sarah. ‘Hurry,’ he said, ‘knead three bushels of flour and make loaves.’ Then running to the cattle, Abraham took a fine and tender calf and gave it to the servant, who hurried to prepare it. Then taking cream, milk and the calf he had prepared, he laid all before them, and they ate while he remained standing near them under the tree.

‘Where is your wife Sarah?’ they asked him. ‘She is in the tent’, he replied. Then his guest said, ‘I shall visit you again next year without fail, and your wife will then have a son.’

As I begin my prayer, I become conscious that I am in God’s presence.
I welcome him again into my heart and offer this time of prayer to him.
I then take the time to read the text attentively.

As I consider the story, perhaps I can concentrate on Abraham. He is resting in the heat of the day, but as soon as he sees the three men he runs to them, greets them and does not cease rushing until all is as he wants it. Even then he does not rest but remains standing to serve them.

How do I respond to his enormous hospitality?
What experience do I have of being welcomed so completely and gratuitously?
I turn to the Lord and speak of this.

How do I myself greet the stranger I meet at the door, on the street, in a gathering ...?

I note how the visitor is sometimes one, sometimes three.
In what way can this mirror my relationship with God, three in one?
I quietly end my prayer with ‘*Glory be ...*’

GOSPEL LUKE 10: 38–42

Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha, who was distracted with all the serving, said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered: 'Martha, Martha,' he said, 'you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part; it is not to be taken from her.'

I come to my place of prayer and I take the time to become still.

Aware of being in God's presence, I breathe in his love and goodness.

When I am ready, I read the Gospel slowly, a couple of times.

I may wish to place myself, in my imagination, in the scene.

It is Martha who welcomes Jesus into her house and makes sure that Mary is present. I watch her busily preparing the meal. I listen to her reaction.

I look at Mary who sits quietly at Jesus's feet, listening to his teaching and maybe questioning him.

As I contemplate the sisters, which is the one I identify with most today?

Why is that? I speak to Jesus of how I feel.

I consider the other sister and ponder her point of view.

What feelings arise in me? Again I speak to the Lord.

Martha and Mary probably coexist in all of us. Is this true of me?

How can I hold both reactions in balance?

As I spend time contemplating this Gospel, what do Jesus's words:

'Mary has chosen the better part' mean to me in my life now?

Are his words an encouragement to me, or maybe a form of correction?

In what ways can I respond?

I speak to Jesus, my guest today. I may question him or sit in attentive silence.

Perhaps this week I can be both hospitable, like Martha, and deeply present, like Mary, to the people I meet.

I thank God for this time with him, and I ask for the graces I need just now.

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

My lord ... kindly do not pass your servant by. *First Reading*

Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain? *Psalm*

The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory. *Second Reading*

You worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. *Gospel*

This week's texts if you want to reflect further

Genesis 18: 1–10; Psalm 14 (15); Colossians 1: 24–28; Luke 10: 38–42



The Lord
appeared to
Abraham
at the Oak
of Mamre



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JESUIT
Ministries



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