

16TH SUNDAY ORD. (C)

THERE IS THE NEED FOR ONLY ONE THING IN LIFE

There is no one in the world who has nothing to be anxious or think about in his or her life. If nothing at all, we think about what to eat and wear, and how the day will unfold to meet our expectations.

Abraham had his own anxieties and worries in his life. He had no child and he worried about who would succeed him or take charge of his property after his death. But that did not make him to forget his creator. He was faithful to God and was ready to show kindness to all. One example of his kindness and generosity is what we heard in the first reading. He welcomed the strangers he did not know before. He gave them water to wash their feet, gave them food, and waited on them as they ate. His reward was a promise of having a child the following year.

Jesus was welcomed by Mary and Martha and as their custom demanded, they were to serve Him. Martha started with the preparations, as Mary sat with Jesus. In reality they all did the right thing, but Martha missed her blessing by complaining about her sister.

Jesus told Martha that she was worrying about many things, but there was only one thing which was needed, and that is to be with Jesus to listen to His word. This does not mean that it is wrong to serve others or take care of strangers. Martha was wrong by being angry with her sister.

Each and every one should be both Mary and Martha, everything that we do should be done in the Lord; St. Paul told the Colossians “Whatever your work is, put your heart into it as done for the Lord and not for human beings, knowing that the Lord will repay you by making you His heirs. It is Christ the Lord that you are serving,” (Col.3:23-24).

In the second reading, St. Paul expressed the one thing needed to be done in his life, and it was to fill up what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of His body, which is the Church. His desire was to admonish everyone and teach everyone with wisdom, that he might present everyone perfect in Christ. His suffering was not just for himself but more importantly, to help other Christians to know Christ and be present to Him.

In our day to day activities, we become so anxious about successes, and

worry about our needs that we forget to be kind, generous, and patient. We forget that Jesus is the master of all things and that everything was created through Him and for Him, and that everything holds together in Him. We occupy ourselves with things and that we forget to spend time with Him. We neglect the most important “thing” needed in our lives - Jesus.

Abraham sat quietly waiting on the strangers as they ate. Mary sat quietly at the feet of Jesus listening to Him. How many of us find time every day to sit quietly before the Lord to listen to Him. Even some of us who find time to pray do not allow the Lord to speak to us. We always ask or tell Him to be quiet and listen to our complaints. Silence before the Lord is very important in our lives. He speaks to our hearts, and He reveals to us His plans for us.

Some of us also find it difficult to welcome strangers. Maybe due to lack of trust and fear, or maybe due to pride and selfishness. Jesus welcomes everybody and cherishes all. He told His followers: “Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me; I will certainly not reject anyone who comes to me, because I have come from heaven not to do my own will but to do the will of Him who sent me,” (Jn.6:37-38). The author of Hebrews also has this to say: “Continue to love each other like brothers, and remember always to welcome strangers, for by doing so, some people have entertained angels without knowing it,” (Heb.13:1-2).

“That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and what you are to wear. Surely life is more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life? So do not worry...Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your heart on His kingdom first,” (Mt.6:25-34).