

Spiritual Development Speech 2017

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The woman of the Bible that I chose to study is Martha of Bethany, sister of Mary and Lazarus. The three siblings had a special relationship with Jesus as stated in John's gospel 11:5 "though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus..." and visited their home in Bethany, a village near Jerusalem.

It is easy to identify with Martha, and this is why. Martha welcomed Jesus and his disciples and went to work serving them. She was very frustrated when her sister did not help her, but was instead sitting and listening to Jesus and so asked Jesus to intervene.

Jesus was not unkind in his response to her. He observed that Martha was worried and distracted about many things that kept her from really being present to him. He reminds her that there is only one thing that is important – Listening to him! I sometimes see Martha in myself – worried and distracted by all I have to do and forgetting to spend time with Jesus in prayer.

During the next visit from Jesus, when he comes to raise Lazarus from the dead, we see that Martha has learned her lesson. She drops everything and goes to greet Our Lord. After telling him that Lazarus had died, Jesus said to her "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26)

In our busy lives, we need to take time to be with Our Lord. We can do this by setting aside time each day for prayer and sitting quietly with no distraction, like the TV, the ever present cell phone or thinking of what we need to do that day, – just listening to what He has to say! If there is an Adoration Chapel in your area, you could commit to one hour a week to sit in the presence of Our Lord and pray. Pray the rosary daily for Our Lady's intercession to her Son. These are but a few ways that we can be present to Him.

In conclusion, I would like to say this prayer:

St. Martha, pray for us that we might serve Jesus better. Help us to overcome the distractions and worries to listen to His words and to be present to Him this day.

Madame President, this ends my report.