**The Collect and Gospel Reading appointed**

**for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church  
is governed and sanctified:  
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,  
that in their vocation and ministry  
they may serve you in holiness and truth  
to the glory of your name;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**A Reading from Luke’s Gospel chapter 10, verses 38-42**

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way,

he came to a village where a woman named Martha

opened her home to him.

She had a sister called Mary,

who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.

But Martha was distracted

by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him and asked,

“Lord, don’t you care

that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?

Tell her to help me!”

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered,

“you are worried and upset about many things,

but only one thing is needed.

Mary has chosen what is better,

and it will not be taken away from her.”

***Pause for Thought…***

I wonder how many times, when reading that great story from Luke 10, you’ve asked yourself the question:

*“Which would I be (or even, which am I) – a Martha or a Mary?”*

Or I wonder how many times a preacher you’ve heard has asked you to choose one or the other - to be *either* a Martha or a Mary?

Actually, I’m not at all certain there’s a choice to be made between being a *Mary* - sitting at Jesus’ feet, quietly listening to the Master, or a *Martha* - rushing around all over the place fussing about and doing all the practical stuff.

I don’t think there’s any need for us to make up our minds

*which we’re going to be*, because in the end, there’s really

no difference between them for they **both** are wholeheartedly engaged in active service of Jesus.

Learning *from* Jesus and learning *about* Jesus are of limited use if we don’t put what we learn into useful, fruitful active service.

Running around like headless chickens doing what we think are great things for Jesus is of limited use if it doesn’t spring from

the genuine knowledge of and love for Jesus that can only come through learning about him and from him.

We all need to have the best characteristics of **both**

Martha **and** Mary in the way we live out our Christian faith.

We don’t need to choose between them.

We should try to be more like ***both of them.***

And anyway, there will be times in our Christian journey when we need to be a Mary and sit quietly at Jesus’ feet, being taught and prepared to continue his ministry and share what we’ve learned.

And there will be times when we will need to be up and doing like Martha – engaged on active service, getting things done, offering practical help, working and caring for Jesus and his people.

We don’t need to choose between Martha and Mary

because there’s really not that much difference between them…

We, and all our brother and sister Christians,

need to be the listening, learning disciple

***and***

the practical, busy worker…