Message to Marton Friends for Sunday 20th July 2025  
  
Dear Marton Friends  
  
Please find attached this week's update from Rev Steve including his very affirming and encouraging reflection on this week's gospel reading.  
  
This weekend we have our **Celtic Evening Service** in St Mary's at **6pm**on **Sunday 20th July.**Everyone is always very welcome.  
  
It was lovely to sit INSIDE church for **Midday Prayers**this week, enjoying a cooler day, with time to relax and chat and catch up on news and prayer updates. We hope to continue to pray together each week on Tuesdays throughout the summer, meeting from 11-12ish, praying for our church, our parish and any situations that are on our minds, sharing thoughts on faith and also celebrating the peace and presence of God in thankfulness. All very welcome - we have also had some lovely dogs join us for these sessions!  
  
August is looking like it's going to be a busy month at Marton Church, with our 2 regular services on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, plus a Quiet Day on Saturday 30th and a Benefice Service celebrating Creationtide at 4pm on Sunday 31st August. Not to mention all that scything and raking!   
  
As mentioned in this week's update, Steve has been planning ahead for the **Celtic Quiet Day (Sat 30th August)** which has the theme **“Resting in God”.**The day will run from **10am-2.30pm**with short spoken Celtic-style reflections followed by time and space for personal quiet reflection and optional creative activities. If you enjoy sketching, painting, writing, knitting/crochet, bird watching or just carving out some free time to think and read and 'be' then do come and join us if you can. This is intended to be space for us all to take a break to reconnect with God. I'm really looking forward to it! Refreshments will be available from 9.30am, we'll ask all participants to bring a packed lunch and the day will end with a short communion service. If you can't stay for the whole day, then you are very welcome to come and go. It would help us enormously if you could book in via [martonintheforest@gmail.com](mailto:martonintheforest@gmail.com) please so we can send any other information about the day.  
  
I've often thought about Martha and Mary and this week's gospel reading. I am perfectly capable of being like Martha - rushing around with an endless 'to do' list. Obviously, it's gone a bit wrong though when she feels frustrated with Mary, and Jesus gently challenges her for choosing busyness. I also aspire to be like Mary, losing track of time to focus on what is actually more important in the here and now. However, surely if Martha and Mary had both just sat with Jesus all day that wouldn't have been practical or comfortable either - there was a fire to tend, water to draw from the well, food to prepare. I think we constantly juggle with this work/life/rest/play balance and rarely get it completely right!   
  
This lovely blessing comes from the Northumbria Community (a book called Celtic Daily Prayer Book 1, given to Marton by Frances) and is entitled 'Prayers for committing our work to God'. This is quite a long prayer so I've only included the beginning, middle and the end which is followed by the instruction, '*Pause for reflection before resuming your activity'.*That sounds like a pretty good balance to me, as it really is up to us how long that pause might be....  
  
**This day is Your gift to me;  
I take it, Lord, from Your hand  
and thank You for the wonder of it...  
  
*Stand at the crossroads and look,  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is,  
and walk in it,  
and you will find rest for your souls...*  
  
Help me to find my happiness  
in my acceptance  
of what is Your purpose for me:  
in friendly eyes  
in work well done  
in quietness born of trust  
and, most of all,  
in the awareness of Your presence  
in my spirit.  
Amen.**

Every blessing

Caroline  
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