**THE UPDATE #274 (20 July 2025) for the Forest of Galtres Benefice*.***

**Fifth Sunday after Trinity 2025**

 *Welcome to this week’s update. There is no video reflection from the Diocese as it hadn’t been released as this update was published. There is a written reflection from me. We continue to pray for the Holy Land as well as Ukraine, prayers below. The monthly What’s On for July which is attached as a separate PDF page.*

**From me:** This week our Gospel reading is from Luke 10.38-42, where Jesus makes his first visit to Martha and Mary. The emphasis is about getting our priorities right, and spending time at Jesus feet. Spending time in stillness, listening, praying, waiting on the Lord, waiting on the Holy Spirit to speak into our hearts and minds and to discern God's will for us, God's will for our lives, God's will for our churches. This theme, this spiritual discipline leads nicely into the offering we are making in our benefice at the end of August to have a quiet day, a day to simply be, see the details below.

Blessings
Steve.

**Saturday 30th August - from 10am-2.30pm
'A Celtic Quiet Day: Resting in God'.**

This is a free day focusing on rest and connection with God using reflections and resources from the Celtic Christian tradition. Please bring your own picnic lunch: drinks will be provided, and we do have a loo! Come for the whole day (refreshments from 9.30am) or any part of the day. Booking is not essential but would be very helpful - please email martonintheforest@gmail.com so we can confirm arrangements and the structure of the day.

**Dates for your diary:**August Bank Holiday Weekend 23rd-25th – pop-up café at Farlington.
Benefice Quiet Day at Marton Saturday 30th August.
Sunday 31st August, Churches Together Creationtide Service at Marton 4pm

***Coming to church this week* 10.00am Holy Communion at Stillington**

**20 July 10.00am Morning Worship at Sutton**

 **6.00pm Celtic Worship at Marton**

***Coming to church next week* 10.00am Morning Worship at Stillington**

**27 July 10.00am Morning Worship at Sheriff**

 **10.30pm BCP Holy Communion at Farlington**

**A reflection on Luke 10:38-42 for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity 2025.**

**Jesus Visits Martha and Mary**

**38**Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. **39**She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying. **40**But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.’ **41**But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; **42**there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’

*‘Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’* (v. 42)

In a world that never stops spinning, where productivity is prized and stillness often mistaken for laziness, Jesus' gentle words to Martha in Luke 10 come as both a challenge and a balm: *‘Mary has chosen the better part.’* Mary, who simply sat at the feet of Jesus and listened.

This story does not rebuke Martha for her service, Jesus sees her love and her worry, but it does remind us that our value is not found in our busyness. Mary chose presence over pressure, relationship over responsibility, devotion over distraction. And Jesus calls it ‘the better part.’

Many of us feel guilty for stopping, for not doing more, helping more, achieving more. But the guilt that comes from resting, from choosing stillness with God, is not ours to carry. It’s a weight the world may try to place on us, but Jesus never does. In fact, He gently invites us to put it down.

To be like Mary is to remember that we are human beings, not human doings. Our worth is not in what we accomplish, but in Whose presence we seek. In every hurried day and crowded to-do list, there is always a space beside Jesus that is ours for the choosing.

So this week, let’s give ourselves permission to pause. To stop, breathe, listen, and sit with Jesus. For that time – like Mary’s – will never be taken away from us. Amen.

Revd. Steve

***A Prayer for the Holy Land:***

**O God of all justice and peace
we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma
of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.
Be with those who need you in these days of suffering;
we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.
While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace,
we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples.
Guide us into your kingdom
where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children
for, to all of us, you are our Heavenly Father.
In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

***A Prayer for Ukraine:***

**God of all peoples and nations,**

**Who created all things alive and breathing,**

**United and whole,**

**Show us the way of peace that is your overwhelming presence.**

**We hold before you the peoples of Ukraine and Russia,**

**Every child and every adult.**

**We long for the time**

**When weapons of war are beaten into ploughshares**

**When nations no longer lift up sword against nation.**

**We cry out to you for peace;**

**Protect those who only desire and deserve to live in security and safety**

**Comfort those who fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones**

**Be with those who are bereaved.**

**Change the hearts of those set on violence and aggression**

**And fill leaders with the wisdom that leads to peace.**

**Kindle again in us a love of our neighbour,**

**And a passion for justice to prevail**

**and a renewed recognition that we all play a part in peace.**

**Creator of all hear our prayer**

**And bring us peace. Make us whole. Amen.**