

great faith, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

There was a division among the Jews at the time, between those who believed in life after death and those who did not. It was the Sadducees that did not believe in an afterlife. Martha clearly is not one of these. Not only does she believe in a resurrection of the dead, but she believes that Jesus is the one who has come to make it all possible. And she couldn't be more right.

Martha's profession of faith comes at a particularly low point in her life: her brother Lazarus has died. So I think Martha is the patron saint of all of us who choose to witness to our faith even when times are hard. Those who live faithfully when they are sick or dying, or when they are grieving, or when they are looking for work, or when they are suffering from addiction, or whatever it may be, can look to St. Martha as their patron. Because when our faith is tested and we choose to live it anyway, that is when we are most like the saints. And St. Martha is one to lead us in proclaiming, "Yes, Lord: my faith may be tested right now, but I believe anyway. You are the Christ. You are the resurrection and the life. You are the one who is coming into the world!"

******(excerpted from: fathermulcahy.com)

AN EXCERPT FROM POPE BENEDICT XVI

CASTEL GANDOLFO, 18 JULY 2010

*******Dear friends, as I said, this Gospel passage (Luke 10: 38-42) is more than ever in tune with the vacation period, because it recalls the fact that the human person must indeed work and be involved in domestic and professional occupations, but first and foremost needs God, who is the inner light of Love and Truth. Without love, even the most important activities lose their value and give no joy. Without a profound meaning, all our activities are reduced to sterile and unorganized activism. And who, if not Jesus Christ, gives us Love and Truth? Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us learn to help each other, to collaborate, but first of all to choose together the better part which is and always will be our greatest good.

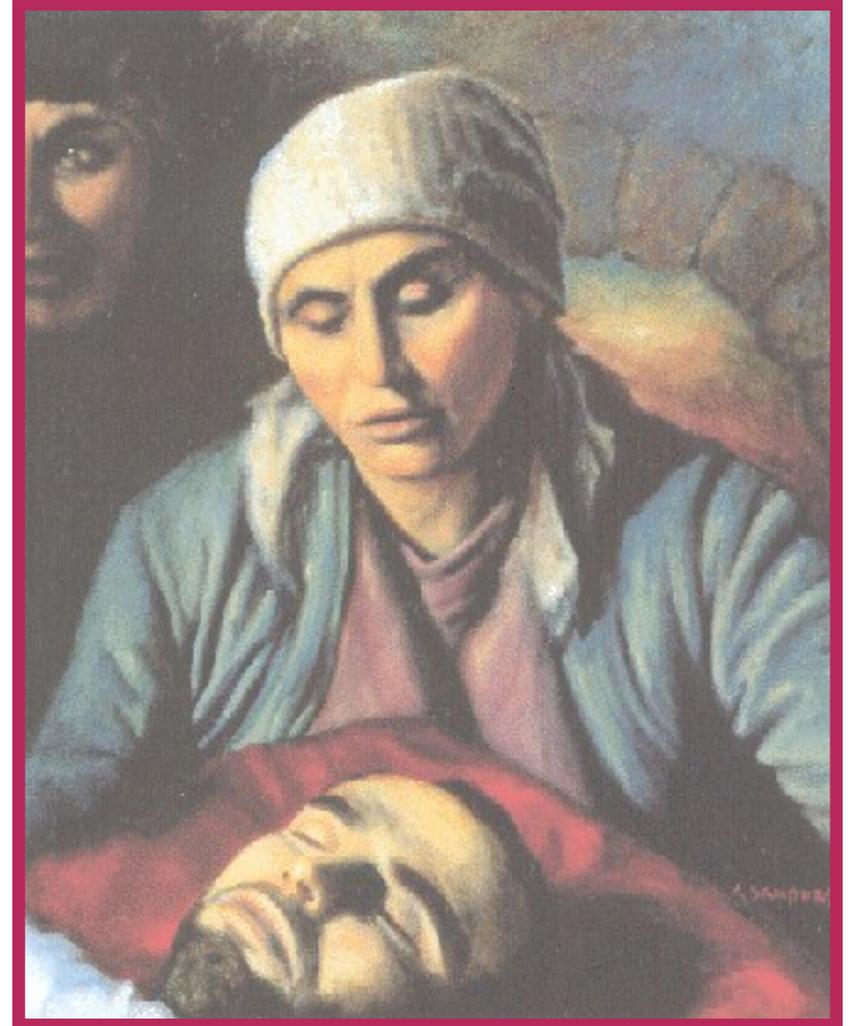
*******(excerpted from: www.wf-f.org)

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Saint Martha

Feast Day: July 29th

Patron Saint of Cooks and Servants



**Martha said to Jesus,
"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."**

**Jesus said to her,
"Your brother will rise again."**

SAINT MARTHA

*"Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus." This unique statement in John's gospel tells us of the special relationship Jesus had with Martha, her sister, and her brother.

Apparently Jesus was a frequent guest at Martha's home in Bethany, a small village two miles from Jerusalem. We read of three visits in Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-53, and John 12:1-9.

Many of us find it easy to identify with Martha in the story Luke tells. Martha welcomes Jesus and his disciples into her home and immediately goes to work to serve them. Hospitality is paramount in the Middle East and Martha believed in its importance. Imagine her frustration when her sister Mary ignores the rule of hospitality and Martha's work in order to sit and listen to Jesus. Instead of speaking to her sister, she asks Jesus to intervene. Jesus' response is not unkind, which gives us an idea of his affection for her. He observes that Martha is worried about many things that distract her from really being present to him. He reminds her that there is only one thing that is truly important - listening to him. And that is what Mary had done. In Martha we see ourselves - worried and distracted by all we have to do in the world and forgetting to spend time with Jesus. It is, however, comforting to note that Jesus loved her just the same.

The next visit shows how well Martha learned this lesson. She is grieving the death of her brother with a house full of mourners when she hears that Jesus has just come to the area. She gets up immediately and leaves the guests, leaves her mourning, and goes to meet him.

Her conversation with Jesus shows her faith and courage. In this dialogue she states clearly without doubt that she believes in Jesus' power, in the resurrection, and most of all that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus tells her that he is the resurrection and the life and then goes on to raise her brother from the dead. Our final picture of Martha in Scripture is the one that sums up who she was. Jesus had returned to Bethany some time later to share a meal with his good friends. In this home were three extraordinary people. We hear how brother Lazarus caused a stir when he was brought back to life. We hear how Mary causes a commotion at dinner by anointing Jesus with expensive perfume. But

all we hear about Martha is the simple statement: "Martha served." She isn't in the spotlight, she does not do showy things, she does not receive spectacular miracles. She simply serves Jesus.

We know nothing more about Martha and what happened to her later. According to a totally untrustworthy legend Martha accompanied Mary to evangelize France after Pentecost.

But wouldn't it be wonderful if the most important thing that could be said about us is "They served"?

Martha is the patron saint of servants and cooks.

IN HER FOOTSTEPS

Dorothy Day said: "If everyone were holy and handsome, it would be easy to see Christ in everyone. But it was not Christ's way for Himself. Ask honestly what you would do when a beggar asked at your house for food. Would you give it on an old cracked plate, thinking that was good enough? Do you think that Martha and Mary thought that the old and chipped dish was good enough for their guest? It is not a duty to help Christ - it is a privilege." In what ways do you serve Christ, grudgingly or sparingly? Do you serve others the way Martha served Christ?

*(excerpted from: www.catholic.org)

MORE ON SAINT MARTHA

**You know, I think St. Martha gets kind of a bad rap in general. She is maybe best known for the fact that she complained about having to do all the cooking and serving while her sister Mary sat at Jesus' feet the whole time. But I think that reputation is undeserved. I think today's Gospel reading gives us a better look at why Martha is indeed a saint. This reading gives us Martha's profession of faith. Jesus asks her if she believes that he indeed is the resurrection and the life, and she responds with