

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Genesis 18:1-10a
Psalm 15:1-5
Colossians 1:24-28
Luke 10:38-42

Monday July 18
Micah 6:1-4,6-8
Ps 50:5-6,8-9,16-17,21,23
Matthew 12:38-42

Tuesday July 19
Micah 7:14-15,18-20
Ps 85:2-8
Matthew 12:46-50

Wednesday July 20
Jeremiah 1:1,4-10
Ps 71:1-6,15,17
Matthew 13:1-9

Thursday July 21
Jeremiah 2:1-3,7-8,12-13
Ps 36:6-11
Matthew 13:10-17

Friday July 22
St. Mary Magdalene
Jeremiah 3:14-17
Jer 31:10-13
John 20:1-2,11-18

Saturday July 23
Jeremiah 7:1-11
Ps 84:3-6a, 8a,11
Matthew 13:24-30

In this Sunday's Gospel reading, Jesus speaks to us about our anxieties and worries. They distract us. They're harmful to us if we let them control our lives, because they take our eyes off of our Lord and focus us on what's going wrong and how it might get worse.

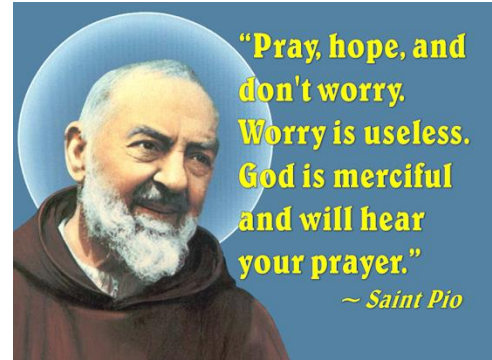
Mary chose the "better part"; she didn't let anything distract her from being a disciple learning avidly from Jesus. When we make the time to put aside the busyness of life to sit quietly and learn from Jesus, we discover reasons why our worries aren't really so worrisome.

Only as we sit quietly at the feet of Jesus do we find hope that overcomes despair, peace that conquers anxiety, and wisdom that gets us through trials. Even the littlest worry, such as Martha's concern that her kitchen chores wouldn't get done, is a sin when it takes our eyes off of Jesus. Nothing that distracts

us from Jesus is ever good for us.

We cannot grow in holiness when we're not watching Jesus and learning from him how to be holy. We cannot love as he loves nor receive all the love he gives us unless we have a prayer life that includes quiet time alone with him, drinking up his lessons and his loving embrace. Prayers said while driving or listening to homilies isn't enough.

Anxieties and worries are varying degrees of fear: We're afraid that something bad is going to happen.



Even when there's a legitimate reason to worry, fear blocks our view of Jesus, because it turns us away from him.

We need to recognize fear as a warning flag that's telling us to slow down, quiet down, and sit down with Jesus for a good discussion on whatever it is that's bothering us. He's got the answers, the encouragement, and the affirmation that will bring us peace.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What has been worrying you lately? What are you anxious about? What are you fearing might happen? Write them on a list and take them to Jesus in a quiet prayer time.
2. What lessons is Jesus trying to teach you in those situations? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you learn from Jesus. Search the Bible for additional inspiration.
3. What are some of the ways we can slow down our lives and improve our prayer times?
4. Tell the story of an experience you had when quiet prayer relieved an anxiety or solved a problem.