

A truck rams into a crowd in Nice France. A peace rally in Dallas is disrupted by a sniper. A nightclub in Orlando is shot up by a gunman. Is it any wonder that our age is being called, among many things, the age of Anxiety. All the news reports about violence, and terrorism and blatant hatred has people worried and anxious. And in our gospel today we have the poster child of anxiety: Martha.

Now please don't think that I am trying to compare Martha's hosting woes with the numerous tragedies of our world. But there can be all degrees of anxiety and fear. Martha's just happened to be in the realm of entertaining her guests. And we should not think for a minute that Martha was a bad person. Even though she was upset that her sister Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus rather than helping her get the meal ready. Martha loved God too. She just had a different way of showing it. She was demonstrating her love by putting on a big dinner for the Lord and his followers.

Jesus saw her distress and heard it in her voice and said to her lovingly (lovingly) "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things." He wants her to stop for a minute and

appreciate the moment that is before her. His point is also meant for all of us as well. Sometimes we have to stop being busy and give God our undivided attention. In other words we have to stop in our busyness and Pray.

Working in our life and doing things for others is fine but we also have to take time to pray if we want to be a model disciple. If we are not careful the activities of our life could overwhelm us and stress us out. By inserting times of prayer and quiet into our busyness we can alleviate some of the pressure that work can develop in us.

I can personally speak on this topic. Being the pastor of two parishes it can become very easy for me to be come consumed by my work and the hectic pace of any day or week. Every day I am committed to scheduling in some time for prayer and quiet. I do my morning and evening prayer, I pray mass and then I also am dutiful about taking my day off every week. I enjoy praying the rosary and I take walks with my dog. On these walks God and I

converse, sometimes I talk and sometimes I listen. I also make it a point in my daily homilies to remind the mass goers to take some time in that day to find a shady spot or a comfy chair and spend some quiet time with the Lord. I am also going to remind all of you that the reason we call Sunday the Lord's Day is because we need to spend some time with the Lord. Coming to mass gives us the opportunity to come out of the craziness of the world and sit with God even for just an hour. By coming to mass we express our love for God which is the greatest prayer we can offer.

In these troubling and violent times we need to calm our fears and reduce our anxiety. We can do that at the feet of our Lord just like Mary did in the gospel. In Matthew's gospel Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."