

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday, July 21, 2019

Reflection by Father Ed Rama

Vocation Director

I remember the years before becoming a priest when I worked as a project manager for an engineering firm in Queens, NYC. One Friday afternoon I was asked to perform a Property Condition Assessment (which I had done a thousand times) on a 6-story building in Flatbush, Brooklyn. When I arrived at the building I was immediately overwhelmed by the size, which took up about a square city block; a huge building! Part of the Property Condition Assessment was to inspect the façade, windows, roof, and building systems. As I walked around the property everywhere I looked there were cracks in the masonry, major problems throughout the structure. All I could think of was how long it was going to take me to inspect this property and the lengthy process of writing the report for the client. I remember complaining to myself that it was going to be a late night of work followed by having to fight my home through the city traffic. While I was grumbling and complaining to myself, filled with anxiety, my coworker noticed one of the elders of the community entering the building. She was carrying her groceries and struggling to enter the building. My coworker immediately assisted her with opening the door and helping her with her groceries. She turned to him with such gratefulness and she blessed him saying, "God Bless you". What a blessing to have from one of God's holy ones and yet I knew that I missed out on that blessing because of my anxiety and concerns for the building inspection.

In our Gospel this Sunday, Martha is so anxious about serving the guests and having her sister Mary help her that she too missed out on the blessing. She got caught up in the moment with anxiety and the busyness of the world that she failed to recognize the blessing

of having Jesus so close and to hear His voice. How often do we forget or get so busy that we fail to recognize the presence of our Lord.

Mary recognized the moment and she remained at the feet of Jesus to receive His graces. Mary represents the contemplative, that is, the one at prayer. Jesus reminded Martha as He reminds us in our time of the importance of prayer, and the need to be with Him, to hear His words. Each time we gather as His people we hear His words proclaimed in the Sacred Scriptures. His words are given to us in the Commandments and the Teachings of the Church. He desires that we hear Him in the silence and solitude of our prayer life. It is in these moments of prayer that we come to recognize His voice and come to know His will for us.

In order for us to discern God's will in our lives it is essential that we spend time with Him in prayer. Mary, the sister of Martha, was at the feet of Jesus listening to Him. Jesus invites us to spend time with Him in silence and solitude. In His time, He reveals His will for us. If He is calling you to the Priesthood it will be in prayer that you will come to know this. Often when He makes this known there will also be the gift of His peace in your heart. That peace will linger for some time and when you recall the thought of Priesthood that peace will surface again.

Jesus told Martha that Mary has the better part and it will not be taken away from her. Seek the better part...Seek to know the Lord's will in your life...There you will find the greatest joy!