

Stewardship Saint for July: Saint Martha – One of Jesus’ Closest Friends

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SAINT MARTHA – ONE OF JESUS’ CLOSEST FRIENDS

Just before Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem, his close friends, Martha, her sister, Mary, and brother, Lazarus, entertained Jesus at their home in Bethany (John 12:1-8). Martha “served,” while Mary



anointed his feet. It is in the simple statement, “Martha served,” that we recognize Martha for her witness to stewardship. She isn’t a prolific evangelist, she doesn’t work miracles. She simply serves Jesus.

Jesus may have been a frequent visitor to Martha’s home and perhaps this is one of the reasons the Gospel of John reveals to us that “Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus” (11:5). This unique statement in the gospel informs us of the special relationship Jesus had with Martha and her siblings. And, as another one of Jesus’ visits to Martha’s home affirms, Martha continues to be concerned that Jesus be served. Like any good steward, hospitality was very important to Martha (Luke 10:38-42).

What is most revealing about Martha is on the occasion of the death of Lazarus (John 11:1-44). Martha takes an active role, going out to meet Jesus to let him know what happened to her brother while Mary stays at home. Jesus assures her that Lazarus will be raised from dead.

With courage and conviction, Martha confesses her deep faith in Jesus Christ: “I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day.” And then Jesus said to her: “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” When he asked Martha if she

believed this, she replied: “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world” (John 11:24-27).

The feast of St. Martha, a witness to service who confessed her faith in Jesus, is July 29. She is the patron saint of homemakers, cooks, domestic workers, waiters and waitresses, and hotel employees.

July Stewardship Prayer

Good and Gracious God,

We thank You for this gift of summer; of being able to pause, relax and enjoy the abundant gifts You have given us.

At this time of year, our thoughts may turn to vacations and outings. We may experience seashores, mountains or lakesides. We may enjoy fishing, swimming and barbecues.

But whatever our summer opportunities, we realize they are ultimately gifts from You and these gifts, Lord, are ultimately meant to be shared.

Show us the joys of generosity keep us mindful of others and open our hearts to our parish, neighborhood and world. They need the generous spirit of good stewards.

As we enjoy the leisure that summer brings, we thank You for Your many gifts, and ask that You make us a gift to others as well.

In Jesus name we pray.

Amen

