

Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42)

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Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius focuses on cultivating holy desires and the discernment of spirits (as in this Gospel reading), especially in Week 1 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then "Ask for the grace". Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a "colloquy" (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

Introduction: The sisters Mary and Martha were close friends and followers of Jesus', as was their brother Lazarus. Jesus liked to stay at their house and receive their hospitality. Martha is more of an active servant and Mary is more contemplative and relational. Both love the Lord, but on this occasion Martha needs to learn from her younger sister to cultivate the one essential thing: sitting at Jesus' feet to listen to him.

Ask For the Grace: God, our Lord, I ask for the grace I desire: that you order all my thoughts, intentions, and actions to praise and serve you.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Luke 10:38-42 (MSG)

38-40 As they continued their travel, Jesus entered a village. A woman by the name of Martha welcomed him and made him feel quite at home. She had a sister, Mary, who sat before the Master, hanging on every word he said. But Martha was pulled away by all she had to do in the kitchen. Later, she stepped in, interrupting them. "Master, don't you care that my sister has abandoned the kitchen to me? Tell her to lend me a hand."

41-42 The Master said, "Martha, dear Martha, you're fussing far too much and getting yourself worked up over nothing. One thing only is essential, and Mary has chosen it—it's the main course, and won't be taken from her."

1st Reading: Visualize yourself in the Gospel story. Don't seek intellectual insights — stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?

2nd Reading: Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?