

MARTHA'S PLAINT

We're all familiar with the story of Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42) who welcomed Jesus to their home. We relate to them as we ourselves are the Lord's own disciples. In our formation program, we learn the importance of hearing the words of the Teacher. Having grown in knowledge and love of the Lord, we then go on to serve in ministry and mission.

Both the sisters are worthy objects of our emulation, for they show fervor for Jesus each in her own way. St. Luke describes Mary "*who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak*" (v 39). She's in the posture of a disciple before her master, like St. Paul who described himself in Acts 22:3, "*At the feet of Gamaliel I was educated.*" Such focus and commitment is no less shared by Mary's sister, Martha, who is not seated before the Master but is "*burdened with much serving*" (v 40).

In our commissioning ceremony as BLD committed disciples, we profess total surrender to our Triune God. We commit to Church authority, to continued formation, regular prayer, reflection of the Word, and solidarity with community brethren. Who will doubt that this profession requires dedication and commitment? Many times, the disciple shall waver and weaken, pulled away by laziness, many conflicts and worldly attachments.

Like Martha, we may cry out, "*Lord, do you not care?*" Burdened and oppressed, we too will despair and complain. When we compare ourselves with other disciples, we call Jesus' attention: "My work is harder! Must I do all the serving? Send someone else to help me!" Should we then give up? Our commissioning may be a mere ceremony, but we should often contemplate on what our commitment is. We've agreed to our 5-point pledge, and engaged to assume a disciple's obligation wherever that leads.

Our formation is something that we should often fall back on, for it is during this period that we grow in the virtues of service and intercession; acquire our love for God's life-giving Word; and are equipped in all the ways that the Lord's BLD community in its wisdom shepherds all its disciples. But this also means that we should be diligent, humble and yielded during our period of formation.

We need not point out to our all-knowing Lord whatever inequities we may see around us. Christ sees and allows these things to happen for His own reasons and some wonderful plan that is beyond our present understanding. Our call is to focus on the One Whom we serve, to encourage our brethren and promote unity and to do everything out of love. Let our eternal hope overcome all trials. This is the better part.

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