

A Prayer for Inner Peace

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CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: Let us take a moment, in the presence of our God, to consider how we care for our own well-being while carrying out the healing ministry of Jesus. As part of our reflection, we will listen to a story from the Gospel of Luke. Let the words settle into you as you listen to the story. As it is read, take care to notice anything that catches your attention or makes you wonder.

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to Luke:

As they continued their journey, [Jesus] entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him.

She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.”

The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” (Luke 10: 38-42)

(Pause for silent reflection.)

Leader: When we hear the story of Martha and Mary, it is perhaps easier to relate to the experience of Martha. Especially in this time of pandemic, we find ourselves burdened with much serving — both in our personal and professional lives. At work, it might be one more patient’s case to review, one more follow-up call to make or one more record to update. Then, we arrive home and it’s one more load of laundry or one more household item to be checked off an ever-growing list — one more, one more. Martha is angry to be left alone to do the serving; we too may feel overwhelmed and alone.

Yet, we are not alone. As people of faith, we believe God is always with us: “The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior, who will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love, who will sing joyfully because of you.” (Zephaniah 3:17)

In seasons where we feel overburdened, it becomes even more important that we work to act as Mary: we are to sit at the feet of the Holy One and listen for him to speak. Indeed, as we take a moment to pause, breathe and heal, we give ourselves space to hear something other than the noise of our life. We are called to let go of our anxieties and worries and spend time being, resting and healing with God.

- Where do you see yourself in this story?
- How do you relate to Mary and Martha’s experience of service?
- How have you sought rest for your body, mind and heart?
- Does this story mirror your personal experience of walking away from work and into peace?

(As time permits, invite participants to share or write down their thoughts.)

Let us pray.

All:

Holy Word of love,
We recognize our call to serve and heal, to continue your work here on earth.

But let us not forget that we too are your children deserving of love, care, healing and comfort.

Walk with us as we walk away from our work to take time for our own self-care.

Renew us in our mission as we stop to sit with you, share with those we love and rest our weary bodies.

Keep us, renew us, guide us, loving God, with your unending compassion.

We ask this through the name of the Healing One.

Amen.