



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan
February 2 – February 8**

1 – “My eyes have seen your salvation.” (Lk 2:30)

...The Lord has been so good to us. We should thank Him often.

2 -- “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.”
(Mk 6:31)

PRAYER

“Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.”
(Mark 6:31)

“Jesus spent the night in prayer to God.”
(Luke 6:12)

**“Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from
her.”**
(Luke 10:42)

“My house shall be a house of prayer.”
(Luke 19:46)

**“Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted
place, where he prayed.”**
(Mark 1:35)

The local Student Council was scheduled to provide the opening entertainment for a leadership program that the Kansas State High School Activities Association was sponsoring. It traditionally consisted of the band playing or a choral group. Instead, they put their student council on stage, and acted as if we, the audience, were the school, and they were having student council president elections. As I watched, I remember being totally lost as to what they were doing.

There were four candidates: an academic-type, a cheerleader-type, an athletic-type, and an off-center-type. As they lined up across stage, there were nominating and acceptance speeches. Everyone invariably said that if they were elected, they would listen and they promised great things for the students of the school.

SHAPING THE FRANCISCAN FOOTPRINT

by Father Mike Scully OFM Cap., Regional Spiritual Assistant



During the speeches, there was a young boy who wandered around the stage, looking at each person. His hat was on crooked, and evidently confused. I thought he should not have been in the skit, thinking that he was handicapped in some way, and the group on stage seemed to be embarrassed by his presence. Everyone on stage pushed him away. He walked around the whole time of the speeches, and finally, he was pushed off stage. Someone won the election. There was cheering, then sudden silence. The actors froze and the young man came back on stage and said one line: "Even as they promised they would listen to me, they pushed me away."

There is a great lesson there: before we act and do something for anyone, we have to first of all listen.

In one of the Gospels, Martha and Mary are both giving of themselves to Jesus. The reason why Jesus is partial to what Mary did is the same lesson of the high school skit: Mary listened before she acted. Martha was just the opposite—she was acting without listening first.

The lesson is both a psychological and a spiritual one. If we truly want to serve someone, to give to someone, we must listen first, then act. When we listen first, the other person is in charge of the agenda. When we start doing right away, we may have missed what the other wants because we are merely doing what we think the other wants. And therefore it is nothing more than what we want.

If we apply this psychological/spiritual principle to the spiritual life, we come up with this: before we become a Christian who does things, we must become a Christian who listens to Jesus' ideas. If we do not do that, we run into contradictions. A person gives a lot of money to the Church or a charitable cause, for example, while at the same time cheating or hurting someone else; the married person professes to be a good follower of Jesus, but at the same time, will only "selectively listen" to his/her spouse; or people go to Mass, even daily Mass, and tear down another in their speech during the day.

Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus himself in prayer several times, always with the idea of listening to his Father.

In the Gospel story of Martha and Mary, Jesus reminds Martha that Mary has chosen the "better part" because she was able to listen to Jesus before she acted. That is a great thought for us as well.

3 -- "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world."

(Mt 5:13,14)

...Are we? [salt=knowledge of God; light=knowledge put into action]

4 – "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." (Mk 7:6)

...Am I hypocritical in my life?

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5 -- "But what comes out of a person, that is what defiles."

(Mk 7:20)

...Especially in my speech. How is my speech toward others?