

WHERE IS YOUR HEART

Jesus in our gospel from Luke is asking the scribes, Pharisees and you and I, “Where is your heart???? The message in His question is, “Doing right things for the wrong reason’s will lead us farther in the wrong direction. Our efforts at following the law, or rule and obligations are meant to lead us to love, to receiving and giving Love from God and others. But if our efforts are about ourselves, if in the recesses of our hearts we are doing the right things, to either look good, be accepted, or to earn our way into heaven, we remain about ourselves.

Our spiritual journey requires our pursuit of goodness, but on our journey our minds and motives, our purpose must move to our hearts and away from our self-interest.

One of my favorite stories in the New Testament is from Luke Chapter 10. When Mary is sitting focused on Jesus and Martha is complaining to Jesus that Mary isn't helping her. I once read from Fr. Robert Barron's book, "The Strangest Way", an interpretation that I had never heard before that fits here. Jesus tells Martha, "Martha, Martha you are worried and distracted by many things, there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part which will not be taken away from Her". Fr. Barron explains that Martha is uncentered, her heart is not focused, she is distracted, Martha was being about Martha, while Mary's heart is focused. If their roles were reversed, if Mary were to help with the household chores, she would not be worried or distracted by them. And if Martha were to sit at Jesus' feet she would still squirm with impatience, because her heart is divided. The surest sign that

something is off with Martha's heart and soul is that she even tells God what to do.

We too are divided, our motives in doing good and right things are rarely pure. We usually have multiple purposes. Our hearts, depending on the circumstances, are usually torn between our self-interest and the needs of others. So what do we do? We remember, that ours is a journey to God, we are a work in progress, and that Jesus is present to help us. We develop a consistent daily prayer life. We work to develop the habit of asking ourselves, "Why do we do the things we do?". Not just those things we are not proud of but also the good things we do. As we learn to consistently label our motives, we ask Jesus to help us amend them, and heal our wounded hearts.

As we progress on our journey, as we seek our own

hearts, Jesus, our Catholic faith, and things of God will become more important in our life. We will grow into becoming more centered on Jesus, and less centered on ourselves. We will never get to a place where all of our motives are always completely pure and unselfish. But with our efforts and Jesus' help we will be a better, less self-centered person tomorrow than we were today.