

# LITURGY BYTES

## More July Saints

Towards the end of July, we celebrate the feast of Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. These three siblings were evidently close friends of Jesus. He came to their home as a welcomed guest.



At Bethany, Jesus had many friends. He visited often with Mary and Martha, and their brother, Lazarus.

The sisters felt free to call on Jesus at the time of their brother's death, even though it was dangerous for Jesus to return to Judea at that time. **Martha** is known for her simple and yet strong statement of faith in Jesus, after her brother's death when she told Jesus: "Yes Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." Martha also was an active person, preparing meals for her guests and even getting a bit testy when no one was reaching out to help her. Even though Jesus realized that Martha worried about many things, he also commented about her sister, **Mary**, who was sitting at His feet, listening to His words: "Mary has chosen the better part."

Their brother, **Lazarus**, was in danger of being killed by the chief priests because they blamed him for the many Jews who were turning away and believing in Jesus because of all that Lazarus taught them. Many legends abound about the life of Lazarus after Jesus' death and resurrection. Some say he followed Peter to Syria, and others report he was with his sisters and ended up in Cyprus. It is there where he died peacefully serving as a Bishop for 30 years. In 2021, veneration for all three of these saints was combined and is now celebrated by the Church on **July 29<sup>th</sup>**. They are known as the patron saints of siblings.

May we follow the example of these saints and express hospitality and welcome to all who come before us!

Have a blessed, peaceful, and safe week ahead! ~ *Michele Hall*