

Reading for the Memorial of SS Martha, Mary and Lazarus

29th July 2026

First reading

Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21

‘Why is my pain unceasing?

— If you return, you shall stand before me.’

Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me.

Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts.

I did not sit in the company of revellers, nor did I rejoice;

I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation.

Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?

Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?

Therefore, thus says the Lord: ‘If you return, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me.

If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth.

They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them.

And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze;

they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you,

for I am with you to save you and deliver you, declares the Lord.

I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 59(58):2-3. 4-5a. 10-11. 17. 18. R17d

God is my refuge in the day of my distress.

Rescue me from my foes, O God; protect me from those who attack me.

O rescue me from those who do evil, and save me from bloodthirsty men.

See, they lie in wait for my life; the strong band together against me.

For no offence, no sin of mine, O Lord, for no guilt of mine they rush to take their stand.

O my Strength, for you will I watch, for you, O God, are my stronghold, the God who shows me merciful love.

Now God will proceed before me; God will let me look upon my foes.

As for me, I will sing of your strength, and acclaim your mercy in the morning, for you have been my stronghold, a refuge in the day of my distress.

O my Strength, to you I will sing praise, for you, O God, are my stronghold, the God who shows me merciful love.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn8:12

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;

anyone who follows me will have the light of life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 11:19-27

‘I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God.’

At that time: Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother, Lazarus. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus were close friends of Jesus, who often visited their home and went there just a few days before the Passion. Many tend to focus on Jesus’ apparent criticism — that her sister Mary had chosen the better part by sitting at his feet and listening to him rather than bustling about attending to the details of hospitality (Luke 10: 38-42). Jesus does not downplay housework; rather, he invites Martha to keep her focus on the life of the spirit even while working and not to let anxiety distract her. He does not preclude Martha’s listening to him from the kitchen — where she was preparing a meal for them all. The woman in the kitchen will often know exactly what is going on in the rest of her house.

Today we remember Martha’s deep, personal faith in Jesus. It is she who believed in “resurrection from the dead” for those who die in faith. When Jesus calls himself the resurrection and the life, promising that they who believe in him will never die, it was at Martha’s prompting, as she mourned the death of her brother Lazarus. Responding to her prayer, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and many came to believe in him after this sign of his life-giving power.