

## Being versus Doing

One member of your group should read (in a low voice) the Scripture account of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38–42). A second student should read the commentary.

**Reader 1: A reading from Luke, chapter 10, verses 38 to 42: The story of Martha and Mary**

*(Read the Scripture passage.)*

**Reader 1: The Word of the Lord. (New American Bible)**

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Reader 2: Commentary**

The Scripture account of Martha and Mary is preceded in Luke's Gospel by the story of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan, an "outsider," is the only one of those who pass by a poor, beaten, and robbed man who actually **does something** about him—and risks becoming "unclean" in the process. The story of Martha and Mary is followed by Luke's shorter version of the Lord's Prayer in which Jesus teaches his disciples a path to the type of intimate relationship he shared with his heavenly Father. Such a relationship requires contemplation.

**Discuss the following questions, as a group, in light of the reading and commentary above.**

- Why do you think Luke, the Gospel writer, placed the account of Martha and Mary between the accounts of the Good Samaritan and the Lord's Prayer?
- If you were in Martha or Mary's shoes (or sandals)—that is, if you had the choice of sitting and talking with Jesus or serving him a plate of fish and matzo ball soup—which would you prefer? Explain your response.
- Can you empathize with Martha's frustration at feeling that she has to do the work alone?
- What do you think Jesus is getting at when he tells Martha that she is anxious and that her sister has chosen "the better part"?
- No one should deny the importance of work. But, do you also think that the "leisure" time for reflection, prayer, and contemplation is equally important?
- Describe the **corporal works of mercy** and explain how these reveal the Christian ideal of contemplation in action. (You may refer to article 36, "Dedicated to Service," in the student book.)
- Describe the **spiritual works of mercy** and explain how these reveal the Christian ideal of contemplation in action. (You may refer to article 36, "Dedicated to Service," in the student book.)

