

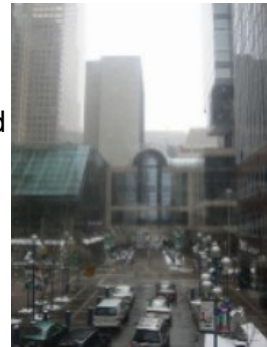


Martha's mistake was not that she attended to the guest's bodily needs. The story of Martha and Mary is not an endorsement of laziness and passivity. In Gen 18:1-10 God visits Abraham in the form of three travelers, and Abraham and Sara pull out all the stops when it comes to food and drink, and this was good.

Martha's problem was that she allowed the activity of hospitality to become a **distraction**. She couldn't see the forest for the trees. She lost her focus and actually got mad that her sister would not join her in her frenetic fussing.

Mary kept her focus. She was not **passive** – attentiveness to the fullness of truth is supremely **active**. That's why the contemplative, monastic life has always been held in the highest esteem in the Catholic Church.

I was once told by a monk that the greatest sin of the modern world is not its lewdness but its busyness. We live in the most distracted, frenetic society of all time. It is tempting in such a society to think we are good Christians and deserve applause because we look God from time to time out of the corner of our eye.



But the fullness of truth, the fullness of life, the fullness of grace deserves our **full** attention. Jesus really cannot be merely **a part** of one's life, but must be **the center** of one's life. It does not mean that our life can't be full of activities. But unless we preserve some quiet time each day to sit at his feet as did Mary, our action will become distraction and we'll be as snappy and unhappy as Martha.

[Be sure to read St. Augustine of Hippo's writings on these faithful women!](#)

This article originally appeared in [Our Sunday Visitor](#) and is reprinted here with permission.

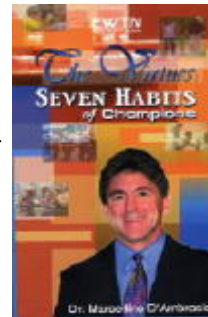
For other articles by Dr. D'Ambrosio to read and download visit the [Crossroads Library](#).

EWTN - The Virtues: Seven Habits of Champions

Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio

As we consider the Catholic Saints, it is a good time to ask the question: "What does holiness look like?" What are the qualities that distinguish the spiritual champion from the spiritual slacker? In this spirited, 8-part mediation from EWTN Home Video, Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio paints the portrait sanctity by discussing the seven virtues or powers that propel ordinary people to the heights of holiness. If you love the Saints of the Catholic Church and aspire to join their ranks, you **MUST** grow in the moral virtues of Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, and Temperance - as well as the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. This series helps you know what to shoot for and provides practical tips on how to make steady progress!

Each VHS tape contains 4 episodes aired on EWTN!



[Set of Two Videos with 8 shows - \\$49.95](#)



PO Box 271227 + Flower Mound, TX + 75027 + 1-800-803-0118 + www.dritaly.com

Mary and Martha - Meet the Lord Everyday!

by: Marcellino D'Ambrosio



I recently got a harsh letter from a Baptist lady protesting that she could not find the word "Catholic" anywhere in the Bible.



True, the earliest occurrence of the term is in a letter of St. Ignatius of Antioch, written 20 years after the last book of the New Testament. But the idea that the Church is "catholic" pops up everywhere in the gospels and epistles. The Greek word "catholic" comes from the word for "wholeness" or "fullness." The "catholic" church is not just a regional sect for an exclusive little group. Rather it must include the *whole* family of God over the *whole* world, welcoming *all*, from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Rev 7: 9). In addition, the "catholic" church cannot pick and choose which doctrines are trendy and convenient, but must be faithful to the *whole* truth. Paul points out that the essence of his apostolic call was to be a "catholic" teacher: "I became a minister of this church through the commission God gave me to preach among you his word in its *fullness*". . . we admonish all men and teach them in the *full* measure of wisdom, hoping to make every man *complete* in Christ (Col 1:25, 28, NAB).

One day, the fullness of life and truth came walking into the living room of a pair of sisters named Martha and Mary. They immediately recognized the privilege of having Jesus in their home and set to work fulfilling the sacred duty of hospitality.

The problem was, they had conflicting ideas of what that duty entailed. Martha's response is very recognizable, especially by those familiar with Mediterranean culture. "Bring out the coffee, the wine (what kind do you prefer?), make sure the china and silverware are laid out in proper order, get out a full assortment of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres (make sure the hot are really served *hot!*)."



Mary thought that the supreme compliment that she could pay to her divine guest, even more than world-class refreshments, was to give him her full attention. The fullness of truth had come to her home to nourish, enlighten, and transform her. Not to receive and unwrap this wonderful gift would be an insult to the giver.

PO Box 271227 + Flower Mound, TX + 75027 + 1-800-803-0118 + www.dritaly.com