



# Martha and Mary

**Goal: To express gratitude for God's grace by putting God first in our lives.**

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Luke 10:38-42

Scripture tells us that Martha was bothered that she was doing so much to prepare for Jesus' visit, to be hospitable, but Jesus says she is distracted from that which truly matters—listening to him, as Mary has chosen. Often the two sisters are portrayed as in a competition, with a winner declared by Jesus. This is not the case. Both are loved by Jesus. The tone of Jesus' voice is tender and familiar with Martha as he repeats her name, gently directing her attention to what is divine and not temporal. Jesus is not condemning Martha or her activity, or all those who serve, or hospitable people to follow, but he is commending Mary and her actions, and those who desire to hear the Word of God. Listening to Jesus is the good thing or the “better part” (Luke 10:42).

What is the grace moment in this story? There are two. One is when Jesus speaks to Martha with such affection. There is grace in his voice and demeanor. One can almost imagine Jesus gently taking the serving tray out of her hands, guiding her to the chair next to his. This is grace—a moment of pause and redirection, offering Martha the better part as well. The other revelation of grace is layered into this moment with Martha. It is the acknowledgment that taking time and paying attention to God's Word is worthy, and not just worthwhile, but to be praised. It is what gives sustenance to be able to serve in Christ's name. In this “grace upon grace” moment, both women are seen and valued by Jesus. Grace is given. Thanks be to God!

### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

Children today are busy, as are their parents. They are pulled in many directions with much to compete for their time and attention. Games, meets, lessons, practices, reports, and projects are all important. How does church or time with God not become just one more item on the agenda?

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

The children in your classroom, and the parents or caregivers who bring them there, are the ones who desire to sit at Jesus' feet or have felt the gentle hand upon their shoulder reminding them of the good thing, the better part. Affirm and encourage them. See and value them. Time with Jesus—on Sunday mornings and through our week—is what nourishes and sustains us as disciples of Christ.

*O God, help me commit to putting you first each day. Amen.*



## Supplies

### Music & Melodies

[bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies](http://bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies)

### Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 10, 20

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

internet-connected  
device

blanket or mats

snack

## Guided Play

choice 1: items for a  
home living or kitchen  
center

choice 2: children's  
Bibles

choice 3: copies of  
**Grace Notes (GN) 1**

## Exploring

choice 1: 54" x 90" vinyl  
or cloth-backed table-  
cloth (makes 9 mats),  
newspaper, duct tape,  
permanent markers

choice 2: puppets from  
"Guided Play"

choice 4: copies of **GN 2**

## GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

### Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Post **SCM i-ii**, "Your Visual Schedule." Cut out and glue the arrow marker onto a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

"Exploring God's Grace" choice 1 requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet the children as they arrive and say, "Christ is risen!" Prompt them to respond, "He is risen indeed!" Tell the children that this is the Easter season, and this Easter greeting is spoken around the world during this time (the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost).

Introduce yourself to parents and caregivers who you do not know. Be sure they know who will be caring for their children. Explain to the parents and caregivers that their children will hear a story about two sisters, Martha and Mary, and how they spent time with Jesus.

Invite the children to choose a guided play activity:

- 1. Home Living Center**—Encourage children to pretend to get the house ready for a special visitor. Provide plates, cups, utensils, placemats, and napkins for setting the table. They can use small cloths and a broom to dust and sweep. Provide pots and pans, mixing bowls, and spoons to cook a special meal. Engage them in conversation about what their family does when they have visitors to their house.
- 2. Storybook Corner**—Gather children's Bibles and bookmark the story of Martha and Mary. Place them in a basket and provide several comfortable pillows. Invite children to look through the books and look at the pictures. Have them share a story with a friend or read the stories to small stuffed animals.
- 3. Martha, Mary, and Jesus Story Puppets**—Hand out copies of **GN 1** and invite the children to color the figures. Tell them that the figures are from today's Bible story. Explain that they are Martha and Mary, who were sisters, and Jesus, who visited them. Have them cut around the dotted line. Give the children craft sticks to glue the paper figures on to make stick puppets. Set aside for "Exploring God's Grace" choice 2.



- T** *Transition times can be more frustrating to children if they have to wait. Be prepared to move to the next activity and alert children of upcoming changes. If children will need to wait, provide a simple task such as a threading activity or hand clapping, to occupy the time and lessen the frustration.*

## Transitioning to Story Time

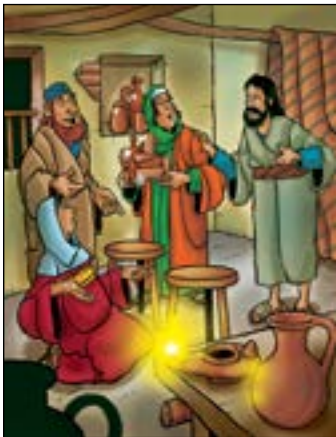
When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, invite the children to follow you as you go and tap each child on the shoulder. Instruct them to get in line behind you and follow where you go. Wander throughout the room and end at the story corner.

### Time with God

**L**

Invite the children to repeat each line after you and follow your motions.

I am looking for God. (*cup hands around eyes*) /  
 I am listening to God. (*cup a hand to an ear*) /  
 I am following God. (*march in place*) /  
 I am learning to share. (*move both hands away with palms up*) /  
 I am being kind. (*hug a neighbor's shoulder*) /  
 I am loving God. (*cross hands over chest*) /



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), [www.pcusastore.com](http://www.pcusastore.com).

## Hearing the Story

**L C**

Open the Bible to Luke 10 so that the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children the story is about Jesus being welcomed to the home of two sisters, Martha and Mary. Read **SCM 10**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, "Amen."

After reading the story, invite the children to picture the story in their imaginations. Use these wondering questions as prompts:

Jesus and his disciples had traveled for many days.

- ▼ I wonder, "How did the disciples and Jesus feel?"
- ▼ I wonder, "Did they miss their families and their homes?"

They arrived at Martha and Mary's house.

- ▼ I wonder, "What did Martha say as she welcomed them to their house?"
- ▼ I wonder, "What did the house look like?"
- ▼ I wonder, "What might the food have smelled like?"
- ▼ I wonder, "How might Jesus and the disciples have felt to have someone take care of them?"



Mary sat with Jesus. Martha continued to work.

- I wonder, “What did Jesus talk about with Mary?”
- I wonder, “How did Mary feel to be sitting and talking with Jesus?”
- I wonder, “How did Martha feel after Jesus told her that Mary had chosen the right thing to do?”

What if Jesus visited my house?

- I wonder, “How would it feel to have Jesus visit my home?”
- I wonder, “What would Jesus talk about with us?”

## EXPLORING GOD’S GRACE



### 1. Make a Martha and Mary Mat

TD

*Before the session, cut a vinyl or cloth-backed tablecloth into 15" x 30" rectangles. A 54" x 90" tablecloth will make nine mats.*

Remind the children that both Martha and Mary had special ways in which they showed Jesus how they cared for him and spent time with him. Explain that they will make a mat that will remind them of both of these ways—welcoming and listening.

Give each child a prepared piece of cloth. Tell them that they will make a double-sided mat. One side will be a Welcome Mat to remember how Martha welcomed Jesus. The other side will be a Listening Mat to remember how Mary took time to sit, listen, and talk to Jesus.

Have the children fold the piece of cloth over to make a 15" x 15" square. Show them how to fold several sheets of newspaper into a square that will fit inside the cloth to provide padding. Help children use duct tape to seal the edges of the mat. Add tape around the folded side to give a uniform appearance.

Help children write their name with permanent markers on one side with the words “Welcome Mat.” Flip it over and write their name again with “Listening Mat.” Demonstrate how to lay the “Welcome Mat” side at the entrance of a doorway to welcome guests and how to flip the mat to sit on and enjoy the company of their guests.

### 2. Martha and Mary Puppet Show

B C

Tell the children that both Martha and Mary wanted to spend time with Jesus. Remind them that Jesus helped Martha see that spending time talking with and listening to Jesus were good things to do.

Use a puppet theater or cover a low table with a cloth and have children get behind the table to present a puppet show using puppets made during “Guided Play.” Read **SCM 10** again and have children



act out the story with the puppets. Encourage them to add their own dialogue and to express what Martha and Mary were each thinking.

Ask the children to think of ways that they can spend time with Jesus.

**F** *One way to talk about fairness is to discuss collaboration. Children tend to believe that when people work together, whatever benefits they obtain as a result should be shared.*

### 3. Martha and Mary Game **F** **L**

Ask the children what Martha did in the story. Affirm that she was very busy preparing the house and making food for Jesus' visit. Have them pantomime actions that would show these activities, such as sweeping, stirring, or even running in place. Ask the children what Mary did in the story. Affirm that she sat by, listened to, and talked with Jesus. Have the children practice these activities by sitting down quietly on the floor.

Tell the children they are going to play a game showing each of the sisters' activities. Tell the children to stand up when they hear the name Martha, do one of the Martha activities, and say "Martha was busy." Tell the children when they hear the name Mary, they should sit down, fold their hands in their laps, and say, "Mary listened to Jesus."

Play the game several times calling out "Martha" or "Mary." At the end of the game, tell the children that Jesus loved both Martha and Mary, and the ways they cared for him. Remind them that Jesus helped Martha stop being so busy and spend time with him.

Invite all the children to sit down. Pray the following prayer.

Dear God, thank you for teaching us about Jesus. May we make time each day to spend time with him. Amen.

### 4. Coloring Page **C**

Hand out **GN 2** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture. Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- I wonder, "How did Martha feel when she saw that Mary was not helping?"
- I wonder, "What was the disciple thinking?"
- I wonder, "What would I do to get ready for Jesus to visit?"

Use "wonder" questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wonder questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.



## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

FA

Encourage each child to put away one toy or object. Invite the children to sit around a table or on the floor.

Sing “Jesus Taught Us How to Love”—**SCM 20**—together while you serve the snack. Ask the children how they can spend time with Jesus this week.

Say a litany and ask the children to respond with “Thank you, God”:

Thank you, God, for the times we are busy.

**Thank you, God.**

Thank you, God, for times we are quiet.

**Thank you, God.**

Thank you, God, for Jesus.

**Thank you, God.**

Help us to spend time with Jesus each day.

**Thank you, God.**

Amen.

As the children leave, bless each one: “(Name), spend time with Jesus today. The grace of God is with you.”



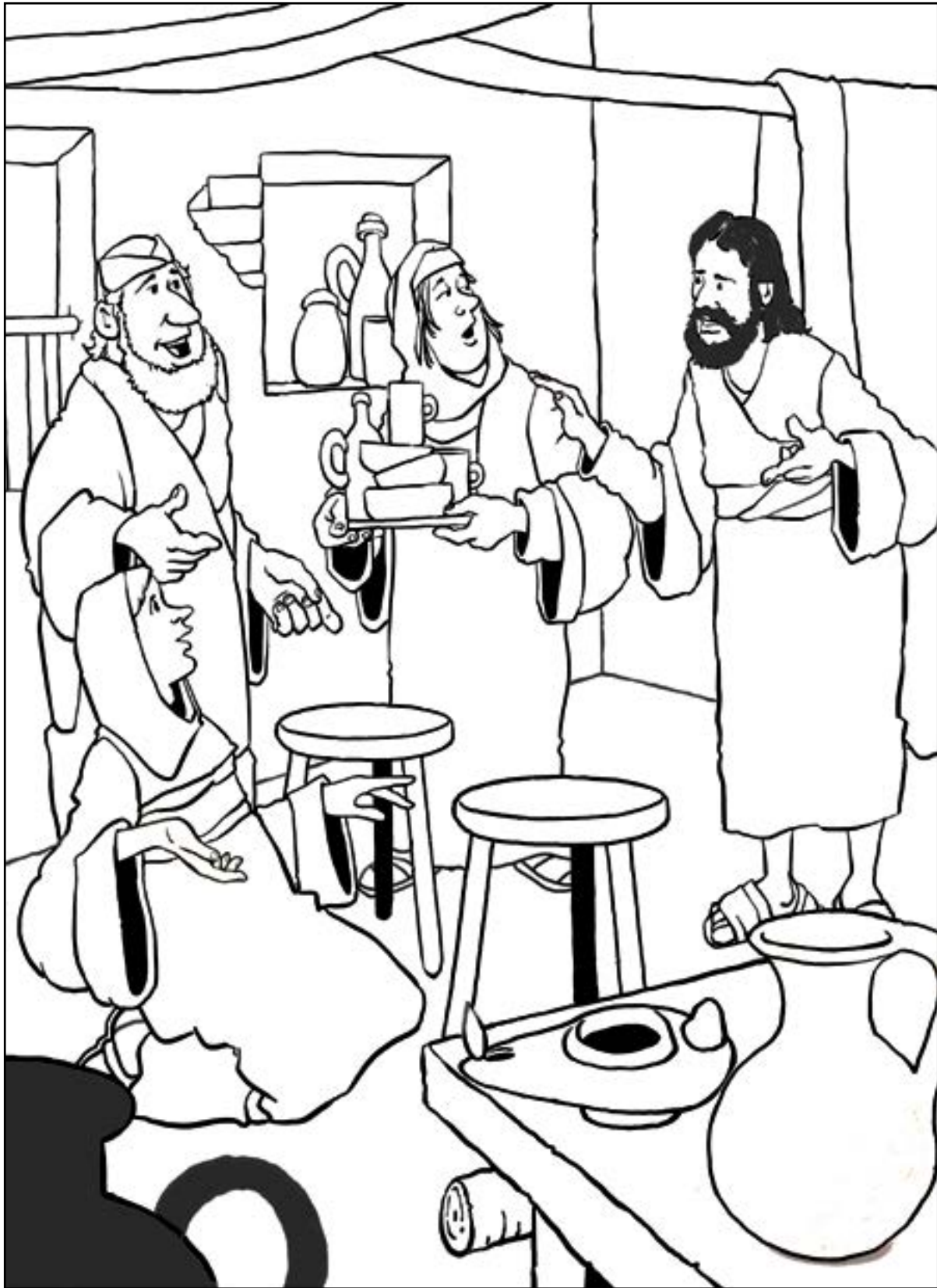
Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads), where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).







# Martha and Mary



Martha and Mary spend time with Jesus.

