



SIEBENQUELL

---

## **To choose what I need without denying the other: Marthas Kitchen III**

---



*In the last reflection I wrote: The one thing that is necessary is to do what is fitting. Each sister should choose what is fitting and necessary for her at this given moment, without denying that the other might need something entirely different.*

*Mary has chosen the good part, which will not be taken away from her. What Jesus neither says nor implies here is that Martha has chosen the wrong part for herself. However, she must not demand that Mary automatically enters the room that is presently fitting for Martha. Rather, the question here should be: if Martha is too exhausted and overwhelmed by one part of her life, perhaps it is time to enter another room. And if a person can no longer listen due to hunger or boredom, then perhaps they should enter the kitchen rooms of life. Only one thing is necessary. The question of coherence is always: What does this hour demand of me? This is about biblical justice: to each his own, not to each the same.*

*Jesus often teaches this. For example, John's disciples ask why Jesus' disciples do not fast as they do. Here the slogan is: the same for everyone. In Mt 9, 14 - 15 it says:*

Then John's disciples came to him and said, 'Why do your disciples not fast, while we and the Pharisees fast? Jesus answered them: 'Can the wedding guests mourn while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast.

*Only one thing is necessary: What does this hour demand of me?*

*Or as Kohelet 3 so aptly puts it:*

**There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens:  
a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,  
a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,  
a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
a time to love and a time to hate,  
a time for war and a time for peace.**

*Only one thing is necessary: What does this hour demand of me?*

*Once again, I emphasise that we should not misuse this story. The kitchen is also a room in the house, part of the centre of life. And since God wants to share the centre of life with us, he also wants to share the experience of the kitchen with us. The kitchen is the place that reminds us of our physicality. In the kitchen, our very pleasant need for food is reawakened, but also our struggle for survival. The taste of good things, our small joys and pleasures, and the transformation of the gifts of this earth and the sun into something that serves our lives, all this happens in a kitchen, in this room at the centre of life. Here too is the abode of God.*

*Jesus is the bridge between Martha's cooking and Mary's listening. In the end, they must join hands again and become sisters. Just as we must reconcile everything that belongs to the centre of life. Otherwise, the family of the house will be divided, and we know what Jesus says about this: 'If a family is divided within itself, it cannot endure. (Mark 3:25)*

**Erik Riechers SAC**

*Vallendar, August 15th, 2024*