

## Friday - March 17

*"Be still and know that I am God!*

*Psalm 46:10a (NRSV)*

"Let's get moving so we can get it done!" If I had a dime for every time I uttered those words. I tend to be a hit the ground running type of person. I have my daily task list and I take great pleasure in crossing things off of it. Most of the items on my list are not life changing, "make the world a better place" type of tasks. They are the everyday, get groceries, do laundry, clean the house kind of tasks. When it comes to Bible stories, I would say I am more of a Martha than a Mary.

In our Thursday morning bible study, we have been reading *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. It offers a number of spiritual practices designed to help the reader encounter God in the world. One of the things I have longed for and prayed for is a deeper awareness of God's presence in my life. One chapter in the book is entitled, "The Practice of Paying Attention." As an exercise, we were tasked with examining a plant. It involved slowing down. It involved being intentional. It involved being focused on something that I usually did not pay much attention to. I examined the plant and noticed that each leaf had a similar pattern of green and white stripes, yet each leaf was unique. The number and width of the stripes on each leaf varied. There was such detail. Branching off of the plant were runners supporting new young plants, miniature versions of the original. I saw this plant in a way I never had before. I had always overlooked its beauty and complexity. I could never create something like it. I had a hard enough time remembering to water it. This plant had to be the work of a loving Creator. Something way bigger than myself. Like Martha in the Bible, could it be that God's presence really was all around me and in my busyness I missed it? I will probably never be a Mary. I still have my lists and enjoy checking them off. But I have learned the value of slowing down, of paying attention, of appreciating creation and giving thanks for God's handiwork.

Shelly

**Prayer:** Dear God, grant us the opportunity to pause and explore Your magnificent creation. Help us to see Your presence even in the small things that we often overlook. Amen.