

In Praise of Domesticity

The second half of July pretty much represents the thick of summer vacation for many of us when just about everything slows down. Even before I had finished writing this first sentence I knew a correction would be in order. Yes, people are on vacation, schools are closed and many businesses slow down. In light of this we can use an apt verb, that is, everyone moseys along. At the same time the frantic activity associated with regular work does not change. It simply shifts to managing trips to the beach, the mountains, cross country drives or wherever. Automatically there comes to mind endless traffic jams and screaming kids in the back seat. On top of this, of course, we have the heat. Despite this, the last two weeks of July offer a time of relief from all this provided we know where and how to look. It certainly has nothing to do with what I had just described.

A glance at a liturgical calendar during this time of year will show several domestic saints as I'm fond of naming them. By that I mean those who were contemporary with Jesus. More specifically, they weren't tied in with his ministry such as the apostles and others associated with them. We can also include those who did follow Jesus in one way or another, many going undocumented. The same could apply to the time shortly after Pentecost when the church started to expand and some of Jesus' contemporaries were most likely still alive.

Thus these people, minuscule in number, shared the same space and time with Jesus yet don't seem to be out and about following him. By that I means they weren't engaged in serious work nor getting martyred...the real hard core stuff of being intimately associated with what we tend to identify as part and parcel of being a Christian. In fact, they all seemed to remain dyed-in-the-wool Jews but of a nature very particular to themselves and themselves alone. Indeed, all were conscious of their unique role to play which could be described as providing Jesus space to be apart from his work, apostles and especially the ever present crowds and nagging Pharisees. As for this small group, it has one thing in common. In each case Jesus came to them, not the other way around. Now that says a lot. Apart from the now familiar distinction between divine and human natures in one person, Jesus was in need of space. More specifically, a shared space where everyone respected each other without getting nosy as to personal details.

This straight-forward observation is helpful to keep in mind because all too often we get real serious about those who followed Jesus and see how we mirror them. Even

though we'd prefer to have it otherwise, we set ourselves up for a somewhat grim fate awaiting us. The hallmark of all this, if you will? Just about everyone tied in with Jesus suffered for faith in him. If we don't see it, we'll dig it out any-which way. That's the standard that has been held up down the ages and remains valid even to this day. No small wonder that while Jesus may be admired from afar, drawing close to him is fraught with all sorts of perils. Self-denial is the word *par excellence* if we want to draw close to him.

The so-called domestic saints crowded nicely together the second half of July which I have in mind are the virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, the so-called "other Mary," Joachim and Anne, Martha, Mary and Lazarus. All enjoyed a one-on-one relationship with Jesus. As for Joachim and Anne, they're traditionally held to be the grandparents of Mary so perhaps didn't live long enough to see Jesus in his ministry. However, they were privy to Mary having become pregnant in a mysterious sort of way. Chances are they beheld her going off to visit her cousin Elizabeth who also was pregnant. A strange report filtered back to them that the babe in Elizabeth's womb somehow recognized the one in their daughter's womb. Go figure that one out.

As for these domestic saints, they weren't seeking cures, favors nor were they the object of discipline or instruction in one way or another. These we're accustomed to associate with Jesus. Friendship in and by itself was their thing. It was simply domestic in that it took place within the context of a home and for that reason were just plain wonderful.

Our celebration of their memory comes at a good time of the liturgical as well as calendar year, that is, approximately midway through it. The season too is appropriate. Summer is when people tend to go on vacation and supposedly relax as noted above. For some...and I hope more than some...these two weeks or so in July may dispose them to better appreciate what they represent. After we've had the privilege of enjoying their respective feast days, we can savor the presence of these wonderful domestic saints for the rest of the liturgical year, thinking back on them with great fondness. I surmise that by reason of the domestic nature of what's involved here, their memory lingers far longer than anything else.

There's a force, albeit subtle yet nonetheless strong, that tends to crowd out this focus on domesticity. It becomes more evident once you've been in the presence of these special people. After having enjoyed their company, you return to the nitty-gritty details of daily life where knowledge of what these people represent is simply

absent. It's nowhere to be found. You might as well have landed on a different planet. Such an experience is particularly hard on a person recently introduced to this orientation. At this juncture you can either give up considering what you've experienced as fine but was simply an illusion. Then again, you may wish to take another crack at it. The same disappointing result, possibly, but a few more attempts should put you over the hump. Perseverance even in the face of friends who are sincere followers of Christ but are not sympathetic to your endeavor will demonstrate that the situation which has stymied you is backward. Domesticity is where the action's at, not the other way around.

This brings up a necessary cautionary note. Obviously not all members of the church are called to be like these domestic persons. I believe there are only a handful comparatively speaking but a handful is sufficient. There comes to mind one whom I consider the exact opposite of these nine people worthy of being mentioned. That person is none other than Saint Paul who had engaged in tireless missionary work as well as having written a good number of epistles. All those desirous of propagating the Christian faith look to him for inspiration.

Wonderful as he is, Paul is marked by a tireless zeal in part stemming from having persecuted the church. After his dramatic conversion, he spends his life making amends, if you will. And so this particular saint pretty much overshadows everyone else. Because of his prominence in the canon of scripture, it's quite hard to dismiss him. All roads lead to Paul in one way or another. It'd come as no surprise that some of the nine under consideration were aware of his zeal for the faith even before his conversion. They may never have met nor actually knew of each other personally. Nevertheless, those of the nine domestics, if you will, still alive may have admired Paul but did so only at a distance.

At this juncture I'll present some information with regard to these people. Admittedly we know little...next to nothing...but in their case such absence is not important. Their very presence with regard to Jesus Christ was sufficient. As the expression goes, comparisons are odious. However, they speak volumes compared to those who objectively were far more well known for their manifold exploits. I can picture them around a special table in heaven, not unlike one where Martha, Mary, Lazarus and Jesus were gathered. Their very presence...not so much what they were doing nor even discussing...caused the rest of those in heaven to rejoice and if I may dare say, be envious of them.

So with this basic distinction in mind, let's take a look at each of these characters. Individually and collectively. We can start off with **Joachim and Anne** who do not appear in the Bible but are names given to the parents of the Virgin Mary. There exist stories about them which instead of being dismissed as legend need to be honored. Supposedly they were unable to have a child but like **Hannah**, Anne prayed to conceive which she did. So we can draw a parallel between these two women, keeping an eye on Hannah's prayer in the Second Chapter of First Samuel.

Her husband Joachim doesn't seem to fit the description of Elkanah who comes across as somewhat boorish, even bordering upon abusive. Nevertheless, Elkanah seems to go along with Hannah's desire to have her child "appear in the presence of the Lord and abide there forever" [1.22]. The common verb to see or *rahah* is used along with *peny* or "face" with respect to the Lord. And so Hannah wishes her yet to be born son (Samuel) will be as such, *yashav* suggestive of permanent dwelling. And so someone like Hannah is a fine representation of a domestic-type person.

At the top of the list for just about everyone is **Mary**, mother of Jesus. Apart from her unique role, we know very little about her. For the purposes of this article, Mary spends most of her time...actually a good part of her life...within a very local domestic environment. By that I mean the thirty some years before Jesus began his ministry and the time after his death and resurrection. We have no information about that at all, surmising that St John had taken her into his care. Mary is recorded at being near Jesus during his crucifixion plus with the apostles in the upper room shortly before Pentecost and presumably there as well with the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Closely associated with Mary is **Joseph**, well known for his silence. Apart from the birth of Jesus we have no information about him, so we can presume he died some time before Jesus' ministry. Even that is unknown. However, tradition down the centuries certainly made a lot of him.

Early on in Mary's pregnancy she visits her cousin **Elizabeth**. During this time Elizabeth's husband Zechariah was afflicted with not being able to speak when the angel of the Lord told him that he didn't believe his words. And so we have him hovering in the background while the two pregnant women interacted for some time. Given his condition and age, chances are he was a kind of pest, but the two women managed to cope with him. Closely associated with both, of course, are the two babes in the wombs of their mothers who acknowledged each other. As for **John**, he leapt

for joy upon hearing Mary address Elizabeth, the verb in Lk 1.41 being *skirtao*, to leap or to bound as a lamb.

Those mentioned thus far whose names are in bold function early on with respect to Jesus Christ, actually just before his birth. Now we leap ahead approximately thirty years and consider the other five persons to when Jesus is out and about.

Because Martha, **Mary** and **Lazarus** are of one family and their relationship is so entwined, it's impossible to consider each one separately as with the others. There are two reference points. The first is Chapter Ten of Luke's Gospel which contains a situation where the issue of domesticity is central albeit only in a few verses. However, these verses are very important. The second is Chapter Eleven of John's Gospel containing far more information with regard to the three. I'd say from these two points everything spreads out. Yes, bringing Lazarus back to life is important but not as much as the domestic setting in which it takes place.

The opening words of Lk 10.38 are important to contrast Jesus with the two sisters, "now as they were on their way." That is to say, Jesus is going about his mission accompanied by his apostles and most likely other hangers-on, all tasked with proclaiming the kingdom of heaven. Perhaps even some women were with him, friends of Martha and Mary, for many were present at his crucifixion. Now Jesus comes to the home of these dear friends; how they got to know each other isn't spelled out, but given the orientation toward domesticity of this article, it isn't hard to see how let alone why. Domesticity is almost a living reality that wonderfully inserts itself at the right moment and among the right people.

All four were simply drawn to each other, that's why they represent something so important. While the two sisters and Lazarus surely kept a close eye on Jesus' activity, they felt no need to go out and see what he was doing, miracles and all, let alone assist him. While they respected that, it remained secondary. Even if Jesus never performed a single miracle, that would not enter the picture. Friendship pure and simple minus any demands or the like was the bond between them. On top of this it's come as no surprise that Martha, Mary and Lazarus never strayed far from home. They didn't want to nor did they have the need. Jesus latched on to this from the beginning. He knew he could stop by any time and uninvited. The three would welcome him as if he had never left their home. As for Bethany where they lived, it was a stone's throw to Jerusalem. That means all three had the privilege of frequenting the temple with ease.

The scene where Martha and Mary are compared—the former representing the so-called active life and the latter representing the contemplative life—has been commented upon *ad nauseam*.¹ The verb associated with Martha in vs. 38 is *hupodechomai*, literally to receive from under or from beneath, *hupo*. This seems to suggest going all-out in showing hospitality and then some. The added “into her house” serves not only to emphasize this but that Jesus is welcomed there at any time.

Note the way Mary is presented in vs. 39, namely, “she had a sister.” It comes across almost as incidental yet is a subtle way of showing that the two sisters were very different when it came to the practice of domesticity. So Jesus comes to the door, knocks and is received by Martha. While she’s speaking with him—let’s say minus talk about his ministry—but as friend to friend, Mary comes in and sits at his feet. This is her way of showing domesticity, quite a contrast to her sister’s who’d love to say something but was discreet enough to keep silent. With regard to this scene it’s no small wonder that so many people focused upon the difference and failed to see a sense of balance, of equal ways of showing friendship.

After having engaged in the usual small talk among friends, insignificant yet important, Jesus does some teaching. This is a somewhat awkward way of putting it, that Jesus was simply bringing inside the house what he had been doing out in the field. However, the Greek of vs. 39 puts it in a more appealing manner. It precludes the tendency to see opposition between the two sisters because *logos* is the word at hand, that is, word-as-expression. Even more so, it’s a *logos* where friendship is tantamount. Nobody else is permitted to be privy to this, even the apostles which is why there’s no mention of them here. Note the way Mary is listening. She is *parakathistemi pros* the feet of Jesus. That is to say, she is stationed (the verbal root *histemi*) beside Jesus, that is, *para* him. Not only this beside-ness has a specific orientation represented by the prepositions *pros* with regard to Jesus’ feet.

Now that Mary is described in terms of the two prepositions *para* and *pros* with regard to Jesus’ *logos* or if we could put it as such, the *logos* from the *Logos*, Martha on the other hand is distracted or *perispao*. The verbal root *spao* suggests the exertion of force in the sense of pulling at something. Here’s its prefaced with the preposition *peri* or around, that is, making this pulling as coming from all quarters without exception. It’s compounded with “much serving” or *diakonia* where the preposition *dia* or through represents thoroughness at the task with regard to the

1 Lazarus isn’t mentioned here but may be present since Luke wishes to show the contrast between the two sisters.

task at hand. As for this *diakonia* of Martha, it involves doing things from the start such as drawing water, making a fire to cook; in a word, everything had to be done from scratch. Indeed the verb *perispao* fits in perfectly here.

So to look at Mary's *parakathistemi pros* and Martha's *diakonia* (with *perispao*, of course), is not to show a division but two orientations with regard to domesticity in action. To someone with an eye towards Jesus ministry and preaching, this may come across as nice diversion but nothing more. It bespeaks of a certain confinement bordering upon rigidity, lacking the broader or more expansive feel you get through such words as "received him into her house" as noted above. Indeed, Martha complains to Jesus about him not caring about her, *melo* being the verb also as to be an object of concern. Often we overlook the two verbs at hand with regard to Martha being anxious and troubled about one many things. They are *merimno* and *thorubazo* or to be unduly apprehensive and to be distracted.

Immediately follows the famous (or infamous?) "one thing is needful" or the noun *chreia*. Jesus leaves this deliberately unspecified, a way of bringing to a sudden stop Martha's *merimno* and *thorubazo*. He goes on to say that her sister has chosen the better part or *meris*, also as portion described as *agathos* alternately as useful or beneficial. Because she had made this choice which in the situation at hand means sitting at Jesus' feet, she will remain there, if you will, even when he leaves the house. This sitting was described in terms of Jesus teaching. While true, one can't help but wonder who taught whom. Did Jesus' teaching after he left take on a different turn? Just look at the next few verses, the Our Father. And so after Jesus walked away, Mary continued to have this good portion, that is, a fuller understanding of Jesus' death, resurrection and later, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

We have no account of what followed with regard to how Martha and Mary related with each other after Jesus moved on. Surely they must have have plenty of lively discussions. However, it's important to keep in mind that the orientations of the two sisters take place under one roof or better, under one spirit of domesticity. It is the house, if you will, that binds them together, Lazarus included, though he isn't mentioned here in Luke's account.

If the house was comprised of all Martha or all Mary, it would collapse quickly without a leg to stand upon. With this in mind, it's easy to shift over to this house being a prototype of the church to be born at Pentecost. Indeed, when the two sisters heard of that event, they were delighted. "About time" is possibly how they

felt though they could never speak like that publicly. They would desire that this growing body of believers might retain some of what their house had become. Who knows? Perhaps some who were affected by Pentecost rushed back to Martha, Mary and Lazarus all excited at having something common with them, something they had talked about in the past but now has come to fruition. Again, distance-wise, Bethany was a hop, skip and a jump away.

Chapter Eleven of Luke's Gospel begins with the untranslated conjunctive *kai* or "and" which can be taken as showing the close connection between the Martha and Mary incident and praying to the Father, "the one thing necessary?" The Our Father comes across essentially as neutral. That is to say, it doesn't wish for big things but is equally divided between human needs or wants and what belongs to the Father.

Moving on to Chapter Eleven of John's Gospel, we're fortunate to get more details with regard to Martha, Mary and of course, Lazarus. The whole orientation toward domesticity here can be summed up by the straight-forward words of vs. 5, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." Many are familiar with the noun *agape*, a supposedly distinct Christian word for love. Here the verbal root *agapao* as to have warm regard or esteem is used which in light of this article brings out its fuller or best meaning.

Upon arriving at Bethany, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days. Martha went out to meet Jesus upon hearing of his approach. This mirrors her concern as to practical matters while her sister Mary sat in the house. Jesus begins a dialogue with Martha, important words as to him being the resurrection and the life. Mary knew this in advance which is why she didn't have to go outside. This incident seemed to have brought about a change in Martha's natural anxiety and desire to be of service. She returns home and informs Mary in vs. 28 that the Teacher is calling her. Teacher perhaps because as in Luke's account she had been at Jesus' feet *parakathistemi pros* the feet of Jesus. That is to say, she is stationed (the verbal root *histemi*) beside Jesus, that is, *para* him. The change is subtle but real as indicated by the words of vs. 28 "saying quietly," *lathra* also as secretly. In other words, no fuss. There's also a change in Mary. Upon meeting Jesus in vs. 32 she fell at his feet which is quite different from her earlier *parakathistemi* just noted. In other words, Mary showed that she was by no means indifferent but greatly distressed at the death of her brother Lazarus.

And so the text moves forward with Jesus raising Lazarus after which we come to the threshold of Jesus being handed over to be put to death. Chapter Twelve begins

with six days before the Passover when Jesus visits the two sisters and of course Lazarus at Bethany. One can only imagine the conversation with Lazarus having died and brought back to life. The advantage of Bethany is that it's virtually a suburb of Jerusalem. Again, Martha was busy serving when Mary anointed Jesus' feet, the same ones connected with her *parakathistemi* as noted above. Given the significance of their house with regard to domesticity, the scent of this nard permeated it. This visit differs from the other one. That seemed to have been by Jesus alone whereas the one at hand mentions Judas who complains about the waste of money.

We can now move on to **Mary Magdalene**. It'd come as no surprise that she was thick with Martha, Mary and Lazarus even before Jesus came on the scene. In fact all these characters may have enjoyed a well established relationship during part of those undocumented thirty years of Jesus' life. In a way, such years represent domesticity to the hilt. As for Mary Magdalene, she comes on the scene at Jesus' crucifixion. She's not alone but accompanied by a number of women who had followed Jesus who were ministering to him, the verb being *diakoneo*. This verb fundamentally means to function as an intermediary as indicated by the preposition *dia* or through (cf. Mt 27.61).

Diakoneo is left somewhat vague. The common perception is because they are women who took care of the physical needs of Jesus and his apostles. True in a way, a form of domesticity on-the-move. So the closer you look, the more you find this which can be described as a mode of life. Some are more tied down to a given place such as the family described in detail whereas others such as these women are mobile. That infers they were widows and had nothing tying them down.

Shortly afterwards Mary, along with **the other Mary**², take up their position by the tomb where Jesus was buried. There's no reason given for this; actually none is needed because of the great love both shared.

As the story unfolds, Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" return to the tomb the next day, again out of love and respect. They'd probably continue doing so indefinitely. Both echo that sentiment held by the others with which this article is concerned. Tradition has made a lot about the apostles abandoning Jesus while acknowledging this love by a handful of women which, of course, echos that spirit of domesticity. The angel which rolled back the stone commissioned the two women to

² Presumably the mother of James and Joses (cf. vs. 56). Because of the scant reference to her, she will be considered here along with Mary Magdalene.

bring word to “my brethren” [28.10] which they had done. As for what happens next, the two Marys simply pass off the scene. This account is also found in John’s Gospel with Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene and the famous “Do not hold me” of 20.17. The verb is *hupto* which connotes clinging. So with the story of Mary Magdalene and the “other Mary” the account of these domestic saints draws pretty much to a conclusion.

However, the real conclusion is with Mary, mother of Jesus, who is with the apostles before Pentecost though the text is not explicit except that she was in the “upper room” mentioned in Acts 1.13. Perhaps despite the Holy Spirit filling “all the house” [Acts 2.2] we could include Mary and possible some of those women who had ministered to Jesus as noted in Mt 27.61. However, emphasis clearly shifts to the apostles which means that everything will now focus upon mission, suffering and best of all for those involved, martyrdom. When confronted with these powerful forces, domesticity fades into the background but doesn’t disappear. Keeping in mind the two incidents when Jesus had visited Martha, Mary and Lazarus in their home as opposed to outside it, we could say that the church has become a broader home. It’s a natural place to engage in domesticity yet rarely has been appreciated as such. It would come as no surprise that those few people who do have this insight are the ones holding everything together so it doesn’t come apart at the seams.

After having examined a few key contemporaries of Jesus, we’ve seen that they have a way of branching out to include a fairly good number of like-minded people. They form a core around which the church will turn, enabling a place, if you will, for the Holy Spirit to descend and take over from there. Reflecting upon the core group which is celebrated in the second half of July—that being how this short article got off the ground—these so-called domestic saints represent something we all long for but overlook even when reading the scriptural accounts.

What prevents us from appreciating their message is that domesticity infers the banality as well as obscurity tied up with physical activity where emphasis is upon small, homey tasks. They seem so puny compared with The Big Stuff such as preaching, suffering and dying for the faith. The difficulty in following through with it as a mode of life is how little support we see around us. I narrow that down even to those tied in with religion, not so much the so-called secular world view which today is dominant. In both you’d be hard pressed to find a sympathetic voice. The religious people are busy evangelizing or the like whereas the secular people are tied up with business, politics and the like. So if you want to cultivate domesticity, I’m close to saying “good luck.” Such a phrase borders upon cynicism which I’d rather

avoid. You have to take the leap all your own. Perhaps somewhere out there you'll find a household like that of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Again, keep in mind that when Jesus was received "into her (Martha) house," that house was the only worthwhile place on planet earth. Because of that it will remain steadfast through thick and thin. Don't forget. Whether we know it or not, we all long for what domesticity represents. It's our native place, our homeland or our *'erets*, land, earth as well as native territory.

Domesticity allows for a distinction between both external and mental influences with regard to physicality. We associate the former two with what counts whereas in reality it's with the latter. However, the latter...in which we find ourselves already from the get-go...is despised as somehow being inferior. In actuality the two run parallel with each other. Appreciating this distinction is where we can put down roots or better, realize that our roots have been put down already. Here in the realm of physicality is where domesticity reigns supreme. To distinguish this is easy yet on the other, difficult by reason of its subtly. We're dealing with a type of insight that gently swoops then exits like the swift coming and equally swift going of angels recounted in scripture.

I've been toying around with a conclusion a number of times with this brief article, if you will. But before it actually happens I wish to present two personal examples relative to domesticity, my grandfather and a man who ended up pretty much like a quadriplegic though he lived into his mid nineties. As for my grandfather, my fondest memories of him was I went off to grammar school down the street. He had retired a few years earlier and knew how to make the most of his time alternating between garden work in nice weather and puttering around in the basement when it was not so nice. Regardless, he knew how to keep busy. So when I headed off to school around 7.45 am my grandfather was outside doing this or that. How I envied him. I determined then and there that I'd be like him. I'd do him one step better. I'd make permanent a life style as his which he had started to do after many years of employment.

Throughout the decades of growing up, going to school and then entering the monastery, I realized that time was a preparation for what I'm doing now. In light of what a dear doctor friend told me recently, I've adopted a life style based upon *otium*. Go figure that one out if you can. The context? I asked him what's the most pressing problem facing us today. Before I was able to complete my question he blurted out "*otium!*" He had no reason to explain this. It would be a waste of time. I could see the answer written all over his face. Fundamentally *otium* means leisure

but with the intent to be engaged in matters of less concern for most people. That involves a study of matters related to philosophy and theology not in an academic sense though some of that might be involved. Rather, emphasis is upon adopting a leisurely pace where you're not concerned about results or doing it for some other reason. As for my grandfather, he hadn't the slightest clue as to *otium*. That was secondary. He was a true-blue practitioner so event to me when I was of grammar school age.

The second example is more unique. As I had noted earlier, the person involved was a man who had become increasingly incapacitated, so much so that he ended up in a wheelchair and was totally dependent on people for everything. Indeed, he is among those inspiring people in a circumstance that's less than inspiring. Somehow somewhere and at sometime he learned to take his extreme confinement and turn it into a source of joy. People rushed just to help him with the most mundane tasks or the like because they wanted to be infected with this man's boundless joy. We've heard of people like this. However, he was like this continuously. Evidence came from those who cared for him at night and day. One testified upon the witness of several other caregivers that he was as such seven/twenty-four as the expression goes.

As I reflected on his way of life, I recalled that in his earlier years already he had a streak of domesticity running through him. A telltale sign was how happy he was with small things, appreciating them and being thankful for them. This was a kind of warm-up or preparation when later he was confined to a wheelchair. Not only that, he had to be hoisted by some kind of device in and from bed. I recall having seen attendants doing this who came away with tears at seeing a person so joyous and wishing to be like him. This talk isn't meant to glorify my friend. He, like us all, had his limitations. All that really is secondary.

So while domesticity is a genuine delight...the one we're ready-made for...so many things militate against it. As noted earlier, we tend to view Christianity in general as having to get out there in the thick of things, deny ourselves and if lucky, be put to death for the faith. It's quite amazing how much the image of ancient martyrdom as in the Coliseum has affected us in this regard both through literature as well as Hollywood. That represents the royal way to sanctity should we be deemed so fortunate ³. While okay in limited circumstances, it's a real challenge to follow the

³ Perhaps in another article I'll argue against sanctity. It's great, really, but I feel it's outdated. What we need desperately are *philosophoi*, those who are friends with wisdom. I throw in an alternate to *sophia* or wisdom, namely technique and the ability to be cunning about getting

way of domesticity because in most circumstances it infers the long haul as well as done in relative obscurity. That's something most of us reject. No glory in it at all. So in the end we're left to grapple on our own with maintaining the spirit of domesticity along with the general denial of it by society. If you want martyrdom in the original sense of giving witness, try that on for size.

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things in life. No small wonder that to be a *philosophos* is to be inclined to domesticity.