

**As the parish priest of the American St. Munchin's Church in Cameron, Missouri, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to all of you from our members. One year ago I visited here, fearing it would be my only chance to come. I had never visited Ireland before, but I wanted to help re-establish the ties that existed 140 years ago when your St. Munchin's founded our St. Munchin's. I took advantage of the kind hospitality of Canon Michal Liston and Father Michael O'Shea, and I enjoyed my visit with you. In the meantime, I have been doing some work for ICEL, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy. That commission meets next week in Newry. So, I told Father O'Shea I couldn't come all the way from Cameron to Newry without stopping first in Limerick. He is letting me prevail upon his hospitality once again.**

**The ICEL meeting concerns the English translation of the prayers we use at mass. The commission is preparing some changes that are still a few years away. I'm serving as a facilitator, or a kind of secretary for their meeting next week.**

**This past year has been a good one in Cameron. Our biggest news is that we are about ready to break ground in front of St. Munchin's Church to build a new entryway. This will give us space to greet one another before and after the service, indoor handicap accessibility, restrooms, which we've never had in our church, as well as another sacristy, a new reconciliation room, and some storage. We also intend to freshen things up a bit on the inside – new paint and furnishings, that sort of thing. It wasn't all ready to go when I left Cameron on Friday, but I've told them not to wait for me if they can get started before I get home. With the improvements to St. Lelia's here, you know what it is like to undergo a period of construction. It calls for some sacrifice, but in the end it produces a place more conducive for prayer.**

**Today's gospel makes you think this would please Jesus. He visits the home of two sisters, Martha and Mary. Martha is busy with preparations for his visit, but Mary sits at his feet and listens. Anyone who has ever prepared dinner for a guest knows that Martha has a legitimate complaint; Mary should be helping. In fact, it wouldn't hurt Jesus to lend a hand as well. But, Jesus came for another reason. He did not come to be entertained, he came to teach, and Mary did him the greater favor by giving her full attention.**

**It is hard to do what Mary did. Many of us find it easier to perform a service for someone else than to sit quietly and receive a gift, especially if the gift is spiritual conversation. We get very busy, even during the summer when we should be relaxing. We have meetings to attend, buildings to erect, words to write, and places to go. But none of these tasks pleases Jesus more than taking some time just for him, in our homes, reading our bibles, praying before meals, praising God at the start of the day, thanking God at the day's end. When we sit still long enough to make time for the Lord, we have chosen the better part.**