

Vox Populi

22 July 2026

One of the key themes that has emerged from the early Pontificate of Pope Leo XIV is listening.

As Pope, he has been keen to listen to a range of perspectives, taking time to make decisions with prayerful consideration. But he has deeply emphasised the need to first and foremost, listen to the Word of God and of Jesus Christ.

The Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus celebrates three saints who were the embodiment of this theme.

In the story of Lazarus, Jesus Christ calls the dead man to new life. He knocks on the door and Lazarus responds.

“The account of the resurrection of Lazarus, then, invites us to listen to this profound need [for Christ] and, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to free our hearts from habits, conditioning and ways of thinking which, like boulders, shut us away in the tomb of selfishness, materialism, violence and superficiality,” Pope Leo XIV said during his 22 March 2026 Angelus.

Lazarus’ sisters, Mary and Martha, also embody this spirit of listening and desire to respond by serving God.

“One of the sisters welcomes him by serving him, while the other sits at his feet, listening as a disciple would her teacher,” Pope Leo XIV said.

“As we know, Jesus responds to the first sister’s complaints that she would like some help with the tasks at hand by inviting her to recognise the value of listening. It would be incorrect, however, to see these two attitudes as mutually exclusive, or to compare the merits of the two women. Service and listening are, in fact, twin dimensions of hospitality.

“Our relationship with God comes first. Although it is true that we must live out our faith through concrete actions, faithfully carrying out our duties according to our state of life and vocation, it is essential that we do so only after meditating on the Word of God and listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to our hearts.”

Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus, pray for us.