

MORNING MEDITATION

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Serenity is not an escape. It is courage and wisdom and the determination to change what can be and accept what cannot be.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Moses placed two choices before the people: Life and blessing OR death and disaster

Obedience to God's commands, loving him and walking in his ways will bring life and blessing. Disobedience, turning away from God's ways and going after other gods will bring death and disaster.

Today the choice is ours. Choose Life!

Psalm 1

Psalm 1 reflects on two kinds of people and two ways of life: The just man and his way of justice, righteousness and godliness and the wicked man and his way of injustice, unrighteousness, and ungodliness.

Way of godliness brings blessings, and the way of ungodliness brings death and disaster.

Choose godliness.... let it reflect your character!

Luke 9:22-25

Jesus must endure rejection and be put to death but will rise on the third day.

The disciples of Jesus must be prepared to deny themselves, take up their cross each day and follow the master.

Jesus calls his disciples to invest their life into life in the kingdom rather than save it or hang on to it. The loss that comes through this investment of self is real gain in itself.

There is bliss, joy, blessing and grace in investing life in the kingdom, in the denial, in renunciation because it is investment and self-denial for greater wealth, lasting wealth, imperishable wealth....it is wealth that befits God and God's children.

Saint of the Day, February 19 - St. Conrad of Piacenza and 10 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Conrad was born Corrado Confalonieri, a member of one of the noblest families of Piacenza in Northern Italy. The date of his birth is uncertain. He married an aristocratic young woman named Ephrosyne when he was quite young. One day while hunting he ordered attendants to set fire to some brush in order to flush out the game. The fire spread to nearby fields and to a large forest. Conrad fled. An innocent peasant was imprisoned, tortured to confess, and condemned to death. As the man was being led to execution, a remorseful Conrad publicly admitted his guilt. As punishment and reparation for the damages he had caused, the city seized all his assets, only sparing his life due to his noble status.

Soon after this event, Conrad and his wife agreed to separate - she to a Poor Clare monastery and he to a group of hermits following the Third Order Rule. His reputation for holiness, however, spread quickly. Since his many visitors destroyed his solitude, Conrad went to a more remote spot in Sicily where he lived 36 years as a hermit, praying for himself and for the rest of the world. Conrad died kneeling before a crucifix on February 19, 1351. He was canonized in 1625.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs