

MORNING MEDITATION

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Greatness lies also in doing little and simple things
and doing it well with love.**

Revelation 14:1-5

This excerpt contains another vision of John where he sees the faithful survive the anger of hostile powers. He sees the faithful survivors, 144,000 of them (signifying completeness, perfection and inclusiveness), as pure, without deceit, without flaw, with names of the Lamb and of his father written on their forehead (identified as God's own) rejoicing and singing hymns before the throne of God.

Psalm 24

**The Lord's is the earth and its fullness;
The world and all who dwell on it.
For he founded it upon the seas
and established upon the rivers.**

Luke 21:1-4

In the court of the women in the temple, there were thirteen collection boxes known as the trumpets. They were shaped like trumpets with the narrow part at the top and the wider part at the foot. Each was assigned to offerings for a different purpose - for the wood that was burned for sacrifice, for the incense burned on the altar, for the upkeep of the vessels and so on. It is into these that the rich were flinging their coins. Among them was a poor widow who put in "two lepta". A lepton was the smallest of coins; the name means "the thin one". Jesus said, this "thin one" outvalued all the other offerings because it was all she had. She gave from her want and not from her surplus. **She was in her gift, and she was her gift.**

The value of any gift is in the spirit in which it is given and the sacrifice which it involves and above all the presence of the giver in the gift. The gift must carry something of the giver. It is not the size or the weight or the shape or the color or glitter or the glamour, but the presence of the giver in the gift that makes the gift a GIFT.

Walk softly. Give generously. Listen intensely. Speak tenderly. Pray fervently.

Saint of the Day, November 21 - Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and 11 other saints are remembered this day.

The feast of the presentation of Mary dates back to the 6th century in the East and the 15th century in the West. It is based on an ancient tradition that Mary was taken to the temple in Jerusalem when she was 3-years-old and dedicated to God. A church was built there in honor of this mystery. The Eastern Church was more interested in the feast, but it does appear in the West in the 11th century and became a feast of the universal Church in the 16th century.

We read about Mary's birth and of her presentation in the temple only in apocryphal literature. The Gospel of James (unrecognized as historical) tells us that Anna and Joachim offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was 3 years old. This was to carry out a promise made to God when Anna was still childless. Though it cannot be proven historically, Mary's presentation has an important theological purpose. It continues the impact of the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of the birth of Mary. It emphasizes that the holiness conferred on Mary from the beginning of her life on earth continued through her early childhood and beyond.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs