

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

## **Saturday, Fourth Week of Easter**

**Serenity is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of inner peace.**

### **Acts 13:44-52**

Paul was rejected by some of the Jews of Antioch. He began to turn to the Gentiles who welcomed the new faith. Paul and Barnabas were expelled from the territory. Rejected by his own people, with great courage, he continued his missionary journey while telling them that, by their ejection, they proved themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

**Learn to live lives worthy of everlasting life.**

### **Psalm 98**

**Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done wondrous deeds;  
His right hand has won victory for him, his holy arm....  
Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands; break into song; sing praise.**

### **John 14:7-14**

“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father...I am in the Father and the Father is in me...the man who has faith in me will do the works I do and even greater than these...because it is the father who lives in me accomplishing his works...”

Jesus said that the things he said and the things he did, did not come from himself, his own initiative or his own power or his own knowledge, but from God. His word was God's word, his work was God's work, his power was God's power, his life was God's life...God came through in all he was and in all he said and in all he did...

**In Jesus we meet God...God's message, God's mind, God's heart...And in us, today, the world must meet all that is from God and of God...**

**Jesus said that the disciples would do what he did and even greater. We, the disciples of today must continue the mission of Jesus.**

**We must trust the promise of Jesus that it is God, the Father, doing His work in us...speaking His word through us...working out His plan through us...**

## **Saint of the Day, May 2 - St. Athanasius and 12 other saints are remembered this day**

St. Athanasius was born into a Christian family in Alexandria, Egypt in 296. His parents gave him a classical education. A local priest, Alexander, later canonized as St Alexander of Alexandria, recognized his knowledge and talents and tutored Athanasius in theology. Around the age of 19, Athanasius spent a formative period in the Egyptian desert as a disciple of St. Anthony in his monastic community. Returning to Alexandria, he was ordained a deacon in 319 and resumed his assistance to Alexander who had become a bishop.

The Catholic Church, newly recognized by the Roman Empire, was already encountering a new series of dangers from within. A priest named Arius taught that Jesus could not have existed eternally as God prior to his historical incarnation as a man. According to Arius, Jesus was the highest of created beings and could be considered "divine" only by analogy. Many Christians found it intellectually easier to believe in Jesus as a created demi-god, than to accept the mystery of a Father-Son relationship within the Godhead. By 325, the controversy was dividing the Church and unsettling the Roman Empire.

In that year, Athanasius attended the First Ecumenical Council, held at Nicea to examine and judge Arius' doctrine in light of apostolic tradition. It reaffirmed the Church's perennial teaching on Christ's full deity and established the Nicene Creed as an authoritative statement of faith. Near the end of St. Alexander's life, he insisted that Athanasius succeed him as the Bishop of Alexandria. Athanasius took on the position just as the Emperor Constantine, despite having convoked the Council of Nicea, decided to relax its condemnation of Arius and his supporters. Athanasius continually refused to admit Arius to communion, however, despite the urgings of the emperor. Athanasius was accused of theft, murder, assault, and even of causing a famine by interfering with food shipments. Arian emperor Constantius drove Athanasius into exile at least five times for insisting on the Nicene Creed as the Church's authoritative rule of faith.

Athanasius received the support of several Popes and spent a portion of his exile in Rome. However, the Emperor Constantius did succeed in coercing one Pope, Liberius, into condemning Athanasius by having him kidnapped, threatened with death, and sent away from Rome for two years. The Pope eventually managed to return to Rome, where he again proclaimed Athanasius' orthodoxy. In 369, Athanasius managed to convene an assembly of 90 bishops in Alexandria, for the sake of warning the Church in Africa against the continuing threat of Arianism. He died in 373, and was vindicated by a more comprehensive rejection of Arianism at the Second Ecumenical Council, held in 381 at Constantinople.

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