

## **MORNING MEDITATION**

**Thursday, Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simplicity is doing everything out of love of God,  
and not for other reasons.**

The fourth Thursday of November is Thanksgiving Day in U.S.A. We wish all visitors to our website in USA a very happy and joyful day. May God bless you, your families and all in U.S.A. with grateful hearts, generous and joyful sharing, and optimistic spirits. May this day be a day of blessing and grace for you and for all.

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

**Revelation 18:1-2, 21-23; 19:1-3, 9**

The author describes the fall of the great city of Babylon with all its evil forces and being thrown into the depth of the sea not to be found again. Then he describes the joy of the great multitude in heaven singing “Alleluia, Salvation and Glory” at the feast of the lamb. Mighty kingdoms will fall, but God’s kingdom will stand and His people will rejoice.

**Psalm 100**

**Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.  
Worship the Lord with gladness;  
Come before him with joyful songs.  
Know that the Lord is God.**

**Luke 21:20-28**

They admired the beauty and glory of their temple - gazed at it with amazement! They thought they were privileged to be in the presence of a beautiful and enduring reality, the construction of which took over 80 years. Besides its obvious beauty, the fact that the temple was revered as God’s dwelling place on earth made it a permanent structure in Jewish life and spirituality. So, they were shocked at the prediction Jesus made! Even angry! When Luke wrote his Gospel, the prediction of Jesus had come true! The temple was gone! Titus and his troops had conquered Jerusalem and leveled the temple in 70 C.E. But God had not gone from there, nor was he gone from the hearts of the believers! The harsh realities that Jesus predicted did come true and believers faced them with courage.

Jesus encouraged the disciples to accept these hardships as opportunities to bear witness to him and to the good news of salvation. He says: “stand up straight and raise your heads for your ransom is near at hand” - remember his teachings, trust his word and not give over to apocalyptic anxiety. He encourages us not to worry about fearful omens and not give in to the dread of suffering that could come as a result of following him.

**Our faith today is being tested. We need to stand our ground - be deeply rooted in our faith tradition. Our faith must be true, our witness must be authentic and continuous, our hope must be our strength, our love must be forgiving and gracious and benevolent.....**

**Saint of the Day, November 24 - St. Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions and 146 other saints are remembered this day.**

Andrew was born Trần An Dũng in 1795 in Vietnam, taking the name Andrew at his baptism (Anrê Dũng) and was ordained a priest on March 15, 1823. During persecution, Andrew Dũng changed his name to Lạc to avoid capture, and thus he is memorialised as Andrew Dũng-Lạc (Anrê Dũng Lạc).

Andrew Dung-Lac was one of 117 people martyred in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862. Members of the companions group gave their lives for Christ in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, and received beatification during four different occasions between 1900 and 1951. All were canonized during the papacy of Saint John Paul II.

Christianity came to Vietnam through the Portuguese. Jesuits opened the first permanent mission at Da Nang in 1615. They ministered to Japanese Catholics who had been driven from Japan. Severe persecutions were launched at least three times in the 19th century. During the six decades after 1820, between 100,000 and 300,000 Catholics were killed or subjected to great hardship. Foreign missionaries martyred in the first wave included priests of the Paris Mission Society, and Spanish Dominican priests and tertiaries.

In 1832, Emperor Minh-Mang banned all foreign missionaries, and tried to make all Vietnamese deny their faith by trampling on a crucifix. Like the priest-holes in Ireland during English persecution, many hiding places were offered in homes of the faithful. Persecution broke out again in 1847, when the emperor suspected foreign missionaries and Vietnamese Christians of sympathizing with a rebellion led by one of his sons. The last of the martyrs were 17 laypersons, one of them a 9-year-old, executed in 1862. That year a treaty with France guaranteed religious freedom to Catholics, but it did not stop all persecution

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