

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Second Week of Advent

**The office of simplicity is to make us go straight to God,
without regard to human respect or our own interests.**

(Saint Vincent de Paul)

Isaiah 40:1-11

Isaiah shared his vision of what God would do for the salvation of exiled Israel. He described his vision of a voice crying out, “comfort my people....speak tenderly to Jerusalem.....with glad tidings.....valleys shall be filled and mountains shall be leveled, rough land shall be made plain.....all mankind, together shall see the glory of God”.

Isaiah’s vision was not about a geographic transformation of landscape, but a transformation of a people who will experience salvation of God. He called his people to be confident and stand strong and look forward to the day when God will gather his people again and bring them home. In the meantime, he encouraged them to fill what needed to be filled, level what needed to be leveled, make straight what was crooked and make smooth what was rough in their lives. Today, we are challenged to change what need to be changed and bring about a transformation of our life in Christ.

Fill what needs to be filled, level what needs to be leveled, make straight what is crooked and make smooth what is rough in your life.

Psalm 96

**Sing to the Lord a new song;
Sing to the Lord, all you lands.
Sing to the Lord; bless his name;
Announce his salvation day after day.**

Mathew 18:12-14

Jesus was accused of being in the company of sinners. He told them the parable the lost sheep. Even one single sheep is precious. The loss of that single sheep is great. The joy of discovering the lost is even greater! So, will it be with the re-discovery of every person!

Great is the loss if you are lost! Greater is the joy of your re-discovery! Even the angels will rejoice!

You are not just “another” in tens or hundreds or thousands or millions - you just are!

And as you are, you are precious in the eyes of God and precious in the eyes of those who love you!

Saint of the day, December 6 - St. Nicholas and 7 other saints are remembered this day.

Tradition tells us that Nicholas was born on March 15, 270 in Myra, Asia Minor (now Turkey), and died on December 6, 343. Very little is known about the historical Saint Nicholas. The earliest accounts of his life were written centuries after his death and contain many legendary elaborations.

According to a legend, when Nicholas was a baby and his parents brought him to Church to be baptized, he jumped eagerly into the water. A story is told about a man who was so poor that he could no longer buy food for his family. He was going to sell his daughters into slavery so they wouldn't starve. Bishop Nicholas found out about this. So, at night he tossed three bags of gold into their house through a window. Other early stories tell of him calming a storm at sea, saving three innocent soldiers from wrongful execution, and chopping down a tree possessed by a demon. In his youth, he is said to have made a pilgrimage to Egypt and the Palestine area. Shortly after his return, he became Bishop of Myra. He was later cast into prison during the persecution of Diocletian but was released after the accession of Constantine.

Although we know very little about the historical Nicholas, the legends speak of his generosity as well as eagerness to follow the way of Jesus. He challenges us to reflect on how eager we are today to plunge into the waters of Baptism and follow the way of Jesus and how generous we are with the many blessings we have received from the Lord.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs