

MORNING MEDITATION

The Passion of Saint John the Baptist

**Conquest begets enmity; the conquered live in misery;
the peaceful live happily having renounced conquest and defeat.**
(The Dhammapada)

I Thessalonians 2:1-8

In this excerpt, Paul speaks of himself as one who has emerged strong after humiliating experiences. Paul always found strength in his weakness because he believed that in his weakness, the Lord was his strength. He always focused on proclaiming his Lord and master and never proclaimed himself or his ideas. He had good news from the Lord and he proclaimed that good news.

May God be your strength in your weak moments!

Psalm 139

**O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
You know when I sit and when I stand;
You understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize.**

Mark 6:17-29

The disciples spread the good news. They proclaimed the name of Jesus and the message that he brought. Herod heard about Jesus and became curious: “who is this man that I hear about?! Could he be John the Baptist?” Herod feared John and respected him at the same time. It was as though he was haunted by the goodness of John and his own sinfulness at the same time. Herod could not escape the call of goodness and virtue...he was afraid! Herod acted on impulse, afraid of what people might think or say.....

Herodias shows us what bitterness can do to a person...

John the Baptist shows us what courage and faithfulness can do. His life also reveals to us the cost of such courage and faithfulness.

Reflect on the three characters and their qualities and get in touch with what they call forth from you.

Saint of the Day, August 29 - The passion of St. John the Baptist and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Herod, the tetrarch of galilee, had divorced his own wife and married Herodias, the wife of his elder brother Philip. Shortly after he had baptized Jesus on the banks of the Jordan, John denounced Herod for marrying his brother's wife. Herod imprisoned John. He knew that John was a good and righteous man and so did not take any further action against him. Herodias held grudge against John.

In a drunken state, Herod made a vow to give anything that his daughter wished as reward for her seductive dance. Persuaded by her mother, Salome, the daughter asked for the head of John the Baptist. Although inwardly regretful, in his pride Herod could not refuse the request. A guard was sent to behead John in prison. The head of John was placed on a platter and presented to Salome, who gave it to her mother. Jesus honored John as a great man by saying that "no man born of woman was greater than he".

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