

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Fifth Week of Easter

Forbearance releases our feelings of vengeance and retaliation.

Acts 14:5-18

Paul healed a crippled man at Lystra. The people, including their priests, came to honor Paul and Barnabas with garlands and oxen to offer them sacrifice. Paul explained to them that they were only men and that the healing was done through the power of Jesus.

May all you do give honor and glory to God!

Psalm 115

**Not to us, O Lord, not to us
But to your name give glory
Because of your kindness, because of your truth.....
May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and earth.....**

John 14:21-26

There is much about love in this Gospel passage – Jesus and the Father, the disciples and Jesus, the disciples and other disciples – all in one communion of love and fellowship.

Obedience is presented as the only sign of Love – faithfulness to the word of Jesus is faithfulness and obedience to the word of the Father.

Keep listening and be obedient to the word of Jesus. The word of Jesus is the word of the Father and it is the word of love.

This faithfulness to the word deepens the relationship of love and it facilitates further revelation of love and truth and all that follow. Fidelity not only maintains relationship, but also deepens it. Jesus promised that those who are faithful will experience the indwelling of God, that he and the father will make a dwelling place within. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, he said, would teach us all things and help us understand the teachings of Jesus

Fidelity, Obedience and loyalty are not values lived out in monasteries and religious houses. They are lived out where we are - where we live and work - where God has placed us. God is faithful where God is. We are called to be faithful where we are.

Saint of the Day, April 29 - St. Catherine of Siena and 22 other saints are remembered this day.

Caterina di Giacomo di Benincasa was born on March 25, 1347 in Siena, Italy. She was the 23rd child of Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa. The house where Catherine grew up in still exists. Her mother, Lapa, was about forty years old when she gave premature birth to twin daughters Catherine and Giovanna. She had already borne 22 children, but half of them had died. Giovanna was handed over to a wet-nurse and died soon after. Catherine was nursed by her mother and developed into a healthy child. She was two years old when Lapa had her 25th child, another daughter named Giovanna. As a child Catherine was so merry that the family gave her the pet name of "Euphrosyne", which is Greek for "joy."

As a teenager Catherine built a cell inside her mind, from which she could never flee. In this inner cell she made her father into a representation of Christ, her mother into the Blessed Virgin Mary, and her brothers into the apostles. Serving them humbly became an opportunity for spiritual growth. Catherine resisted the accepted course of marriage and motherhood on the one hand, or a nun's veil on the other. She chose to live an active and prayerful life outside a convent's walls following the model of the Dominicans.

She eventually entered the Dominican Third Order at 18 and spent the next three years in seclusion, prayer, and austerity. Gradually, a group of followers gathered around her - men and women, priests and religious. An active public apostolate grew out of her contemplative life. Her letters, mostly for spiritual instruction and encouragement of her followers, began to take more and more note of public affairs.

Her public influence reached great heights because of her evident holiness, her membership in the Dominican Third Order, and the deep impression she made on the pope. She worked tirelessly for the crusade against the Turks and for peace between Florence and the pope.

In 1378, the Great Schism began, splitting the allegiance of Christendom between two, then three, popes and putting even saints on opposing sides. Catherine spent the last two years of her life in Rome, in prayer and pleading on behalf of the cause of Pope Urban VI and the unity of the Church. She offered herself as a victim for the Church in its agony. She died surrounded by her "children" on April 29, 1380 and was canonized in 1461.

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