

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Seventh Week of Easter

The measure of love is to love without measure.

(St. Francis de sales)

Acts 19:1-8

Paul met twelve men at Ephesus, baptized them and confirmed them with the Holy Spirit. They were men who were baptized in the tradition of John the Baptist. Now, filled with the Holy Spirit, they began to spread the good news.

Psalm 68

**The just rejoice and exult before God;
They are glad and rejoice.
Sing to God, chant praise to his name;
His name is the Lord; exult before him.**

John 16:29-33

In this excerpt, John tells us that the disciples finally surrendered! They made a leap of faith! We know! We have seen! We are convinced! You are speaking plainly! We don't even need to ask you! You know our questions before we ask!

Even as the disciples make this great leap of faith, Jesus cautioned them that they would desert him. Jesus knew their weakness, he knew their failure, he knew that they would let him down in the moment of his real need - still he loved them. What is even more amazing is that Jesus knew his men at their worst and still loved them!

It is a very difficult thing to forgive someone and still trust them. In Jesus, we find a merging of forgiveness and trust. Jesus loved them and trusted them even in their weakness! Jesus teaches us to forgive and to trust the person who is guilty of failure.

It is amazing how Jesus was not thinking of how his disciples' failure would hurt him, but how it would hurt them. Love unconditional it is! It is as though he said to them: "I know what's going to happen. Your disloyalty will not come as a shock to me and it does not make any difference to my love. When you think about it afterwards, don't despair". Jesus gave his gift to the disciples: courage and peace.

Saint of the Day, May 25 - St. Rita of Cascia and 23 other saints are remembered this day.

Rita was born in 1386 in Roccaparena, Umbria, Italy. She was married at the age of 12 to a violent and ill-tempered husband. He was murdered 18 years later and she forgave his murderers, praying that her twin sons, who had sworn to avenge their father's death may also forgive. She was granted this grace, and her sons, who died young, died reconciled to God.

After the death of her husband and sons, Rita tried to join the Augustinian nuns in Cascia. She was refused at first because she was a widow, but eventually allowed to enter the convent where she lived the last 40 years of her life in prayer, mortification and service to the people of Cascia. Rita was bedridden for the last four years of her life, consuming almost nothing except for the Eucharist. She died of tuberculosis at the age of 70 on May 22, 1456 and was canonized in 1900 by Pope Leo XIII.

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