

MORNING MEDITATION

Wednesday, Second Week of Advent

**Life purpose is yours and everybody's and not something
that only religious people who meditate and chant in cave gets.**

Isaiah 40:25-31

Isaiah reminds his people that God, who is the author of everything and whose knowledge is beyond all understanding, is eternally present to them. God gives strength to the weak and renews the strength of those who hope in him. So stand strong and be faithful to God as God is ever faithful. Isaiah encouraged his people to live a life worthy of the covenant God had established with them.

Be strong and be a source of strength for the weak.

Psalms 103

**Bless the Lord O my soul;
and all my being, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and forget not all his benefits.**

Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus said, "come to me all who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest.....Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.....I am meek and humble of heart.....My yoke is easy and my burden is light.....".

My yoke is easy - The word "easy" should be translated "well-fitting". This simply means that the yoke is "tailor-made" to fit well.

The discipline, the way, the life that Jesus offers is made to fit us well, "tailor-made" for us - it won't hurt us, it won't burden us.

Jesus came proclaiming good news.....love, forgiveness, healing, peace.....not as an avenging ruler, but proclaiming the triumph of compassion..... Jesus came.....meek, humble.....inviting all to turn to him with their burdens.....

To rest in Jesus is to dwell in him.....to drink fully of his spirit.....to be refreshed and renewed for life and ministry.....as St. Augustine says, "our hearts are restless until they come to rest in you".

Saint of the Day, December 10 - St. Pope Gregory III and 22 other saints are remembered this day.

Gregory was the son of a Syrian named John. He was elected pope by popular acclamation on February 11, 731 and his pontificate lasted till his death on November 28, 741. His pontificate, like that of his predecessor, was disturbed by Byzantine iconoclasm and the advance of the Lombards. He was the fifth Syrian pope and the last pope born outside of Europe for 1,272 years, until the election of Pope Francis in 2013.

After he was proclaimed Pope Gregory III, Emperor Leo III attacked the veneration of holy images. Because Leo III thought the honor paid to Jesus, Mary, and the saints by keeping statues and icons was idolatry, he condemned them and wanted them destroyed. Gregory III sent a letter to Leo III. He couldn't get the letter through because the priest-messenger was afraid to deliver it. So instead, Gregory called a synod that approved strong measures against anyone who would try to destroy images of Jesus, Mary, or the saints.

Gregory took his stand and Leo III apparently thought the only way to move him was through physical force. So, Leo sent ships to kidnap Gregory and bring him to Constantinople. Once again God intervened. A storm destroyed Leo's ships. The only thing Leo could do was capture some of the papal lands. So, Leo got a few acres of land and we kept our wonderful reminders of the love of God, the protection of Jesus, the prayers of Mary, and the examples of the saints. All because Gregory knew when to take a stand and when to stand there and let God work.

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