

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Fourth Week of Easter

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...forbearance. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Acts 11:19-26

The good news of Jesus reached the Greeks and a large number of them believed and were converted to the Lord. Barnabas was sent, from Jerusalem, to minister to them. He was a man full of the Spirit, who encouraged and brought Saul for support in his ministry. For the first time, here in Antioch, the disciples of Jesus were called Christians. **Be gracious and accept, gratefully, the support of others in your ministry!**

Psalm 87

**Zion shall say: "One and All were born in her;
And he, who has established her, is the Highest Lord."
They shall note, when the peoples are enrolled:
"This man was born there."
And all shall sing, in their festive dance:
"My home is within you".**

John 10:22-30

It was the festival of the Dedication, Festival of lights or Hanukkah. King Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) of Syria decided to eliminate the Jewish religion and introduce everything Greek into Palestine. Many Jews died resisting this move of Antiochus. The Maccabaeus brothers began a revolution, fought a good fight and finally won the struggle in 164 B.C. and in that year the temple and all that was used in the temple were purified. It was to remember this event that this Feast of Dedication was introduced – it was actually a rededication of the temple.

It was here in the temple, at this festival of lights, they asked Jesus, again, whether he really was the Messiah. Jesus affirmed his claim again. Some accepted it and others walked away. To those who accepted it, Jesus promised eternal life, a life that is full and safe. This is possible because of the intimacy that he has with the Father. Jesus said to them, "I and the Father are one". All are safe in the arms of the loving Father, whom Jesus revealed.

Acceptance of Jesus and growing in intimacy with Him guarantees intimacy with God, our father.

Saint of the Day, April 23 - St. George and 9 other saints are remembered this day.

Very little is known about St. George's life. He was probably a high-ranking officer in the Roman army. Tradition speaks of Emperor Diocletian torturing St. George to make him deny his faith in Christ. However, despite some of the most terrible tortures even for that time, St George showed incredible courage and faith and was finally beheaded near Lydda in Palestine. His head was later taken to Rome where it was interred in the church dedicated to him. His death may have been on April 23, 303 A.D.

Stories of his strength and courage soon spread throughout Europe. The best-known story about St. George is his fight with a dragon, but it is highly unlikely that he ever fought a dragon, and even more unlikely that he ever visited England, however his name was known there as early as the eighth-century.

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