

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Want to simplify? Eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.

Ezekiel 18:1-10; 13; 30-32

Ezekiel recalls an ancient parable: “Fathers have eaten green grapes, thus their children’s teeth are on edge”. Then, he says that the meaning of this proverb will not be valid any longer. Children do not have to suffer from the father’s mistakes; neither do they have to follow the father’s ways. They have choices to make. They can choose to be good and virtuous. All life belongs to the Lord. He welcomes all who turn to him. He judges each one according to his ways, not according to what his parents did.

Psalm 51

A clean heart create for me, God;
Renew in me a steadfast spirit.
Do not drive me from your presence,
Nor take from me your Holy Spirit.
Restore my joy in your salvation;
Sustain in me a willing spirit.

Mathew 19:13-15

Jesus shows special concern for little children even though the disciples protest. The disciples did not want their master disturbed during his busy ministry to the people. Jesus used this opportunity to teach them something important about the nature of life in the kingdom.

Earlier in Chapter 18, Mathew told us about Jesus teaching the disciples about greatness in the kingdom. The disciples wanted to know who was of greatest importance in the kingdom. Jesus responded: ‘unless you turn and become as children, you will not enter the kingdom of God. You are going in the wrong direction, not in the direction of the Kingdom’. You are aiming at personal power, prestige, etc. which is the opposite of the Kingdom.

Humility is the quality of a person who belongs in the kingdom. Child’s trust, dependence, innocence and purity are all qualities of people of the kingdom.

Reflect on turning toward the Kingdom, away from personal power, prestige, etc.

Saint of the day, August 13 - St. Hippolytus and 18 other saints are remembered this day.

We have very little information about the early life of Hippolytus. He was probably a presbyter of the church at Rome under Pope Zephyrinus (199–217 AD). He was distinguished for his learning and eloquence. His name means “a horse turned loose”. He was a rigorist for whom even orthodox doctrine and practice were not purified enough. He accused Pope Zephyrinus of modalism, the heresy which held that the names Father and Son are simply different names for the same subject.

Hippolytus championed the Logos doctrine of the Greek apologists, most notably Justin Martyr, which distinguished the Father from the Logos ("Word"). An ethical conservative, he was scandalized when Pope Callixtus I (217–222 AD) extended absolution to Christians who had committed grave sins, such as adultery. He felt that the Church must be composed of pure souls uncompromisingly separated from the world.

In 235, he was banished to the island of Sardinia. Shortly before or after this event, he was reconciled to the Church, and died in exile with Pope Pontian. He is, nevertheless, the most important theologian and prolific religious writer before the age of Constantine. His writings are the fullest source of our knowledge of the Roman liturgy and the structure of the Church in the second and third centuries. His works include many Scripture commentaries, polemics against heresies, and a history of the world.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs