

CELEBRATE EASTER

Monday, Second Week of Easter

Tranquility is not a place, but a state of mind.

Acts 4:23-31

The community of believers was filled with the Holy Spirit, and they prayed for the powerful presence of God in all they did. They prayed for God's blessings on their healing ministry as a sign of the presence of the risen Christ among them. They prayed for the conversion of those oppressing them and making accusations against them. They were now living witnesses of all that Jesus taught them while he was among them.

Psalm 2

**The Lord said to me, "you are my son;
This day I have begotten you...
Blessed are they who put their trust in the Lord!**

John 3:1-8

Nicodemus may have come to Jesus at night because of fear of what others might say or think since he was a wealthy man, a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews as a member of the Sanhedrin.

Be watchful! The thought, "What people might say or think", is a fear that keeps many ignorant, unchanged and unfree!

Nicodemus could have come to Jesus in the night because night was the time Jesus was more free, away from the crowd and undisturbed. He could have desired a private and undisturbed conversation with Jesus. There is wisdom in such a choice.

A talk with Jesus in darkness can bring great light into cloud, confusion, uncertainties, etc.

There is an old saying, "it takes one to recognize another". Nicodemus recognized the goodness of Jesus and affirmed that Jesus must have come from God. Jesus, in turn, affirmed, "no one can see the rule of God unless he is begotten from above". Jesus opened a new wisdom to the Jews who believed that they did not need to change since they were already special people of God. One has to be born of "water and spirit" in order to enter God's kingdom. This call to rebirth, to "being born anew" runs throughout the Gospels as well as other books of the New Testament.

To be born anew is to be changed in such a way that it can be described only as rebirth or re-creation. The season of Easter calls us again to “rebirth”, to be “born anew”, to become people transformed in Christ.

Saint of the Day, April 13 - St. Martin I and 8 other saints are remembered this day.

Martinus was born on June 21, 598 near Todi, Umbria. We do not have information about his birth and early life. He was of noble birth, of commanding intelligence, and of great charity to the poor. He acted as papal legate at Constantinople in the early years of the pontificate of Pope Theodore I (642–49), and was a deacon at the time of his election as Pope in 649.

When Martin I became pope in 649, Constantinople was the capital of the Byzantine empire and the patriarch of Constantinople was the most influential Church leader in the Eastern Christian world. The struggles that existed within the Church at that time were magnified by the close cooperation of emperor and patriarch.

A teaching, strongly supported in the East, held that Christ had no human will. Twice, emperors had officially favored this position: Heraclius by publishing a formula of faith, and Constans II by silencing the issue of one or two wills in Christ.

Shortly after assuming the office of the papacy—which he did without first being confirmed by the emperor—Martin held a council at the Lateran in which the imperial documents were censured, and in which the patriarch of Constantinople and two of his predecessors were condemned. In response, Constans II first tried to turn bishops and people against the pope.

Failing in this and in an attempt to kill the pope, the emperor sent troops to Rome to seize Martin and to bring him back to Constantinople. Already in poor health, Martin offered no resistance, returned with Calliopas, the exarch of Constantinople, and was then submitted to various imprisonments, tortures, and hardships. Although condemned to death and with some of the imposed torture already carried out, Martin was saved from execution by the pleas of a repentant Paul, patriarch of Constantinople, who was himself gravely ill. Tortures and cruel treatment having taken their toll, Martin died September 16, 655. He is the last of the early popes to be venerated as a martyr.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs