

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

**Friday, Twenty Fourth Week in Ordinary Time**

**God is steadfast love. God is not a deceiver, that He should offer to support us,  
and then, when we lean upon Him, should slip away from us.**

**(St. Augustine)**

## **I Timothy 6:2-12**

Paul instructs Timothy to treasure and teach sound doctrine, seek virtue, avoid evil and persevere in following the way of Jesus.

**Paul says, “man of God that you are, seek after integrity, piety, faith, steadfastness and gentle spirit. Fight the good fight of faith.”**

## **Psalm 49**

**Hear this, all you peoples; hearken all who dwell in the world.**

**Of lowly birth or high degree, rich and poor alike,**

**My mouth shall speak wisdom;**

**Prudence shall be the utterance of my heart.**

## **Luke 8:1-3**

This excerpt remembers women who ministered to Jesus. They are remembered as women who received the gift of love that their master, Jesus offered, followed him, and supported him out of the generosity of their hearts. Their hearts were opened, and they opened their hearts and minds and treasures in turn and ministered to others.

This kind of opening is at the heart of the Christian story, the story of God’s life and love, the story of our salvation. It began with the openness of a woman full of Grace, a woman of faith, of great love and compassion - a woman who opened her heart and said, “YES”, “may your will happen”. In this excerpt, we read about other women who opened their hearts and minds and ministered to Jesus out of their means.

After the death of Jesus, we find these women of compassion standing beside the tomb, listening to the messenger of God inviting them to open their minds and encouraging them not to be afraid. They opened their hearts to the great news, welcomed the word of the resurrection like thirsty soil and hurried away to share the wonderful news with others because they were open, ready, receptive, docile.....

**Your spirit must be opened for God's goodness and love to grow there. Open minds and hearts are ready to receive the abundant life, love and grace which God constantly offers.**

**Saint of the Day, September 22 - St. Lorenzo Ruiz and 16 companion martyrs are remembered this day.**

Lorenzo Ruiz was born in Binondo, Manila, on November 28, 1594 to a Chinese father and a Filipino mother who were both Catholic. His father taught him Chinese while his mother taught him Tagalog. Lorenzo served as an altar boy at the Binondo Church. After being educated by the Dominican friars for a few years, Lorenzo became a professional calligrapher, transcribing documents in beautiful penmanship. He became a member of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. He married Rosario, a native, and they had two sons and a daughter. The Ruiz family led a peaceful and devout religious life.

In 1636, while working as a clerk for the Binondo Church, Lorenzo was falsely accused of killing a Spaniard. At that time, three Dominican priests, Antonio Gonzalez, Guillermo Courtet, and Miguel de Aozaraza, were about to sail to Japan in spite of a violent persecution there. With them was a Japanese priest, Vicente Shiwozuka de la Cruz, and a layman named Lazaro, a leper. Lorenzo, having taken asylum with them, was allowed to accompany them. But only when they were at sea, he learned that they were going to Japan.

The Tokugawa Shogunate was persecuting Christians by the time Lorenzo had arrived in Japan. The missionaries were arrested and thrown into prison, and after two years, they were transferred to Nagasaki to face trial by torture. They were subjected to an unspeakable kind of torture: After huge quantities of water were forced down their throats, they were made to lie down. Long boards were placed on their stomachs and guards then stepped on the ends of the boards, forcing the water to spurt violently from mouth, nose and ears.

The group endured many and various cruel methods of torture. On September 27, 1637, Lorenzo and his companions were taken to Nishizaka Hill, where they were tortured by being hung upside-down over a pit. Despite his suffering, Lorenzo refused to renounce Christianity. He died two days later on September 29, 1637, aged 42. His body was cremated, with the ashes thrown into the sea. Lorenzo was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 18, 1987. He was among the 16 Martyrs of Japan, making him the first Filipino saint.

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