

# MORNING MEDITATION

## Monday, Fourth Week of Lent

**Stillness speaks louder than words! Be still and just listen!**

### Isaiah 65:17-21

Isaiah shares his hope, a new optimism with his people that God will renew them and recreate new heavens and a new earth. He says that the things of the past will not be remembered, but God's people will be blessed with great rejoicing.

### Psalm 30

**You changed my mourning into dancing  
and clothed me with gladness.....  
O Lord, my God, for ever will I give you thanks!**

### John 4:43-54

The Samaritans and the Galileans believed in Jesus, not because of someone else's story but because they themselves had heard him, experienced him. What the world lacks or urgently needs today is not religion or church or doctrine or sacred scriptures or more theologians. The world needs men and women who experience God, who have encountered God, whose life has been transformed by their "God-Experience". **There is no substitute for personal meeting, personal encounter, personal experience of God.**

The royal official, a man of high standing in Herod's court comes to a man who had no great social standing, just an ordinary village carpenter from Nazareth. The Official humbled himself, swallowed his pride, refused to be discouraged and showed great faith in a power beyond himself. He found faith in someone in whom it would have been impossible to find faith. He had to surrender to someone less than himself in order to discover someone greater than himself. **Humility and self-surrender are virtues that allow us to experience God in the most unexpected places, circumstances and people. Learn to be humble in your ways.**

The Official wanted Jesus to come to his house. Jesus asked him to trust his word and the man did. Healing happens at the word of Jesus - healing happens from a distance with trust in the word of Jesus. The man expressed his faith in a totally trusting relationship.

**True faith is not acceptance of doctrine. It is a trusting relationship.**

## **Saint of the Day, March 16 - St. Clement Mary Hofbauer and 13 other saints are remembered this day.**

St. Clement Hofbauer was born in Tasswitz, Moravia (now the Czech Republic) on December 26, 1751. In his early youth, after the death of his father, he worked as an apprentice baker. Having become a servant in the Norbertine Abbey at Klosterbruck, he was able to follow the call to the priesthood by completing first his secondary schooling and then his catechetical, philosophical, and theological studies in Vienna, Austria. During this time he made yearly pilgrimages to Rome, where he encountered the Redemptorists.

One day after serving Mass at the Cathedral of St. Stephen, he called a carriage for two ladies waiting there in the rain. In their conversation they learned that he could not pursue his priestly studies because of a lack of funds. They generously offered to support both John and his friend Thaddeus, in their seminary studies. The two went to Rome, where they were drawn to Saint Alphonsus' vision of religious life and to the Redemptorists. The two young men were ordained together in 1785.

Drawing candidates to the congregation, they were able to send missionaries to Poland, Germany, and Switzerland. These foundations had to be abandoned because of the political and religious tensions of the times. After 20 years of difficult work, Clement Mary himself was imprisoned and expelled from the country. He returned to Vienna, where he was to live and work the final 12 years of his life. He quickly became "the apostle of Vienna," hearing the confessions of the rich and the poor, visiting the sick, acting as a counselor to the powerful, sharing his holiness with all in the city. His crowning work was the establishment of a Catholic college in his beloved city.

Persecution followed Clement Mary, and there were those in authority who were able for a while to stop him from preaching. An attempt was made at the highest levels to have him banished. But his holiness and fame protected him and prompted the growth of the Redemptorists. Due to his efforts, the congregation was firmly established north of the Alps by the time of his death in 1820. Clement might be called the second founder of the Redemptorists, as it was he who carried the congregation of Saint Alphonsus Liguori to the people north of the Alps.

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