

MORNING MEDITATION

Wednesday, Second Week of Advent

**Forbearance is patiently doing everything possible
to correct an erring brother or sister.**

Isaiah 40:25-31

Isaiah reminds his people that God, who is the author of everything and whose knowledge is beyond all understanding, is eternally present to them. God gives strength to the weak and renews the strength of those who hope in him. So stand strong and be faithful to God as God is ever faithful. Isaiah encouraged his people to live a life worthy of the covenant God had established with them.

Be strong and be a source of strength for the weak.

Psalms 103

**Bless the Lord O my soul;
and all my being, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and forget not all his benefits.**

Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus said, "come to me all who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest.....Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.....I am meek and humble of heart.....My yoke is easy and my burden is light.....".

My yoke is easy - The word "easy" should be translated "well-fitting". This simply means that the yoke is "tailor-made" to fit well.

The discipline, the way, the life that Jesus offers is made to fit us well, "tailor-made" for us - it won't hurt us, it won't burden us.

Jesus came proclaiming good news.....love, forgiveness, healing, peace.....not as an avenging ruler, but proclaiming the triumph of compassion..... Jesus came.....meek, humble.....inviting all to turn to him with their burdens.....

To rest in Jesus is to dwell in him.....to drink fully of his spirit.....to be refreshed and renewed for life and ministry.....as St. Augustine says, "our hearts are restless until they come to rest in you".

Saint of the Day, December 11 – St. Damasus I and 15 other saints are remembered this day.

Pope Damasus I was born in Rome around the year 305. Damasus' parents were Antonius, who became a priest at the Church of St. Lawrence (San Lorenzo) in Rome, and his wife Laurentia. Damasus began his ecclesiastical career as a deacon in his father's church, where he went on to serve as a priest. This Church later became the basilica of Saint Lawrence outside the Walls in Rome.

During Damasus' early years, Constantine I ruled the Western Roman Empire. As emperor, he issued the Edict of Milan (313), which granted religious freedom to Christians in all parts of the Roman Empire. When Pope Liberius was banished by Emperor Constantius II to Berea in 354, Damasus was archdeacon of the Roman church and followed Liberius into exile, though he immediately returned to Rome. During the period before Liberius' return, Damasus had a great share in the government of the church.

Following the death of Pope Liberius on September 24, 366, Damasus succeeded to the Papacy amidst factional violence. He faced accusations of murder and adultery with a married woman in his early years as Pope. He was active in defending the Catholic Church against the threat of schisms. In two Roman synods (368 and 369) he condemned Apollinarianism and Macedonianism and sent legates to the First Council of Constantinople that was convoked in 381 to address these heresies.

One of the important works of Pope Damasus was to preside in the Council of Rome of 382 that determined the canon or official list of Sacred Scripture. He appointed St Jerome as his confidential secretary. Jerome spent three years (382–385) in Rome in close interaction with Pope Damasus and the leading Christians. In order to put an end to the marked divergences in the western texts of that period, Damasus encouraged Jerome to revise the available Old Latin versions of the Bible into a more accurate Latin on the basis of the Greek New Testament and the Septuagint, resulting in the Vulgate.

Damasus also did much to encourage the veneration of the Christian martyrs restoring and creating access to their tombs in the Catacombs of Rome and elsewhere, and setting up tablets with verse inscriptions composed by himself. Damasus rebuilt or repaired his father's church, Saint Lawrence, known as "St Lawrence outside the walls". His pontificate lasted eighteen years and two months.

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