

MORNING MEDITATION

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Trust in the steadfast love of the Lord and his provident care
and be steadfast... the storms of life don't last forever.**

Isaiah 55:6-9

This excerpt is taken from the concluding chapter of Deutero-Isaiah's book of Consolation. The Prophet had repeated over and over again his assurance of God's unconquerable love, constant, forgiveness and mercy. He also had promised his people that God would bring them home from exile and this return would be more glorious than their exodus from Egypt.

Despite the many assurance of the Prophet and despite the feelings of repentance of his people, many of them continued to feel burdened by the guilt of their wrongdoings. They had not learned that God's forgiveness was unconditional; that forgiveness meant new beginnings; that guilt and shame and regret should be replaced with faithfulness to God's law of love. They had problems understanding how God could forgive and accept a people who had repeatedly offended him, how he could love so tenderly and graciously.

It is to them that this chapter is addressed. The Prophet told them that sinners must turn to God for mercy, not because they deserve but because God is generous in forgiving. God's way is radically different from that of men: "My thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord." God's ways are not vindictive or vengeful or mean or petty. God's will to forgive is unfathomable and his mercy immeasurable and his love unconquerable. So, the Prophet challenged his people to turn to God, seek God and call upon God here and now and not just in liturgy and worship in the temple.

**Rejoice! Be happy! Be grateful! God's way is radically different from that of men!
God's will to forgive is unfathomable and his mercy immeasurable and his love
unconquerable.**

Psalms 145

This is a psalm composed for public worship. It is an acrostic (alphabetic) poem, the verses of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The Psalm focuses primarily on God's compassion., especially for the underprivileged and depressed. A daily reminder of praising the unfathomable greatness of God, which goes beyond all our theologies, philosophies and doctrines. Verse 4 invites us to meditate on

the Wondrous acts of God and to pass on this memory to the future generations. Verses 8-9 express the most basic faith of the O.T. about the very nature of God: “steadfast love”, “compassion”all-embracing love, abundant love. Verses 9-10 – All God’s works give thanks because of the “all-embracing love”.

**I will exalt you, my God the King;
I will praise your name for ever and ever.
Every day I will praise you
and extol your name for ever and ever.**

Philippians 1:20-27

Paul had special affection for the converts of Philippi. He wrote to them about how he was caught between two personal and intense desires – one to live for the Gospel and the other to die to live with Christ. In the excerpt referenced above, Paul tells the Philippians that the most important thing in his life was to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.

Paul continued to insist that it did not matter to him if he died. Death would mean glory in Christ. He expressed his deepest desire to live for Christ even if it meant death for him. All that mattered was that Christ was proclaimed because salvation would result from preaching Christ and his Gospel. He instructed his readers to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel. For Paul, Christ was the end, the purpose of his life and all his energies were directed to the final union with Christ.

Stay focused! Direct your energies toward proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus.

Mathew 20:1-16

This is one of the greatest parables that reveals God as a gracious, benevolent, merciful and compassionate person. It is a story of Grace. Whether we have served from sunrise to sunset or only the last hour of the day, God gives because He is grace-filled and not because we have earned or merited.

The favor and mercy of God are not reserved for the meritorious and the saints, but for all, including sinners.

This parable is about a master who chose to reward the workers equally regardless of the length of time they spent in service. All people, no matter when they come, are equally precious to God. The first are not necessarily first and the last not necessarily last. All are precious. In God’s plan, there is no “most favored people or nation” status. Some come into the kingdom in an hour, others in a lifetime - some enter at the beginning of their life and others at the close of their life.

No matter when a person comes to Christ, he/she is equally dear to him.

This parable also contains elements of compassion and generosity. It reminds us that the spirit in which work is done is more important than anything else. "What do I get out of it?" is not a praiseworthy attitude.

Do all you do with love!

Saint of the Day, September 24 - St. Pacific of San Severino and 60 other saints are remembered this day.

Pacificus of San Severino was born on March 1, 1653 at San Severino. His parents died when he was three years old. He suffered hardships until December 1670 when he entered the Franciscan order, taking the name Pacificus, and began a long apostolate of service in his own region. Pacificus was ordained to the priesthood on June 4, 1678 and served as professor of philosophy from 1680 to 1683 for the newer members of the order. Following this he worked for four or five years as a missionary in the surrounding area until suffering lameness and deafness in addition to blindness he was unable to continue giving missions. Though he was in constant suffering from 1692 to 1693, he held the post of Guardian in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in San Severino, where he died on September 24, 1721 and was canonized on May 26, 1839 by Pope Gregory XVI

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