

# MORNING MEDITATION

Thursday, Third Week of Easter

**Dear Lord, grant us the gift of forbearance  
that we may seek to ease the burdens and pressures on others.**

## Acts 8:26-40

Philip, on his journey to Gaza, in a mysterious way, met a young man who was anxious to hear the Gospel. He explained to the young man the prophesy about the suffering servant, shared with him the good news of Jesus and baptized him at his request. **Share the good news with others on your journey. All our journeys give us opportunities to witness to the good news of Jesus.**

## Psalm 66

**Bless our God, you peoples, loudly sound his praise.  
He has given life to our souls and has not let our feet slip.**

## John 6:44-51

The Jews judged things by human values and external standards. They didn't see any more in Jesus than "a carpenter's son" from Nazareth. How could a carpenter's son have a message from God? God's messengers don't fit the human standards and expectations!

**Would one reject a gift because the wrappings don't fit the standard? God's message comes to us through the most unexpected and surprising people, events, situations, and ways.**

The Jews didn't listen. Their minds were closed. They heard with resentment, anger, superiority, indifference.... not with openness to learn. So, they didn't learn and they didn't hear God. **The only listening, that is worth while, is that which hears and learns.**

Jesus began to speak about eating his body and drinking his blood. And this eating and drinking gives life that will last - eternal life. To "eat and to drink" is to take in. So long as Jesus remains a historical figure or a figure in a holy book, he is external to us. But when he enters our life (our hearts, minds), we can feed upon the life and the power and the strength and the vitality and the spirit that He gives to us. Another way of saying it would be: "stop thinking of Jesus as a subject for theological debate....just take him into your life.....then you will have real life.....you will begin your journey into the eternal.

**Revitalize your life with the life of Jesus until you are filled with the life of God!**

**Saint of the Day, April 18 - Saint Athanasia of Aegina and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

Athanasia was the daughter of Christian nobles, Niketas and Irene. She grew up in a pious family and early in life felt drawn to the religious life. Legend says that she experienced a mystical union of a star merging with her heart while weaving at the loom when she was a young girl. However, at her parent's request, she married at age 16 to an army officer. Widowed after 16 days of marriage when her husband died in battle against invading Arabs. She again considered the religious life, but an imperial edict required all single women of marriage age to marry soldiers.

She again married this time to a deeply religious man who felt drawn to become a monk and left with her blessing to do so. She became a nun, gave away the bulk of her possessions, converted her home into a convent, obtained a spiritual director named Matthias, had other sisters move in with her, served as abbess, and lived a life of severe austerity. She built three churches.

The community later moved to Timia where Athanasia became widely known for miraculous healings. To escape the press of people who were drawn to her reputation of holiness, and return to the quiet, prayerful life, she and two sisters fled in secret to Constantinople where she lived as an anchoress in a cell for seven years; while walled away, she was an advisor to Empress Theodora. After seven years, she returned to Aegina, where she died of natural causes three days later at Timia on August 14, 860.

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