

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Serenity comes from saying “Yes” to all that is good, noble and virtuous.

2 Samuel 18:9-10, 14, 24-25, 30 - 19:3

Absalom began to plot against his father David and finally proclaimed himself king in Hebron. Fierce battle began between the forces of David and Absalom and David ordered his officers to spare the life of his son. Absalom was defeated and fled on a mule. But his long hair of which he was vain (2 Sam. 14:26) was entangled in the branches of an Oak. The excerpt referenced above tells us that one of David's soldiers killed him as he hung on the branch. David grieved for Absalom without restraint until Joab rebuked him for thinking more of his ungrateful son than of his faithful followers.

Psalm 86

**Incline your ear O Lord, answer me,
For I am afflicted and poor,
Keep my life, for I am devoted to you;
Save your servant who trusts in you.**

Mark 5:21-43

There are two miracles in Mk.5:21-43 - the healing of the ruler's daughter and the healing of the woman with hemorrhage. Each of them came with what could be interpreted as “inadequate” faith: desperate, having tried everything.....The amazing thing is: they were, all, accepted, with inadequate faith - with what they brought, the way they were.

No matter, how imperfectly we come, the Lord welcomes us.

We do not wait until our motivations, our faith and our theology are perfect. We come....just as we are!

The ruler left all that he was.....his prejudices, his dignity as a ruler, his pride, his prestige.....and came, himself, to Jesus leaving his daughter when she was at the point of death. He left his “self” behind only to find his “self” again in the person of Jesus!

The woman with hemorrhage also had to leave everything behind and risk being caught

and punished for being in public with a hemorrhage. She had to go through humiliating experience in order to reach out and touch the power that healed her and made her whole.

There is nothing beyond the conquest for the one who believes and hopes and loves.

Saint of the day, February 3 – St. Blaise and 22 other saints are remembered this day

According to tradition, St. Blaise was born to rich and noble parents, and received a Christian education. He was a physician before being consecrated bishop of Sebastia, Armenia. During the persecution of Licinius, St. Blaise moved from the town and lived as a hermit in a cave. Blaise was discovered and apprehended. While in prison, he miraculously cured a small boy who was choking to death on a fishbone lodged in his throat. Also, the woman whose pig had been saved brought St. Blaise candles so that his cell would have light and he could read the Sacred Scriptures.

Agricolaus, governor of Cappadocia, tried to persuade Blaise to sacrifice to pagan idols. The first time Blaise refused, he was beaten. The next time he was suspended from a tree and his flesh torn with iron combs or rakes. Finally, he was beheaded.

By the sixth century, St. Blaise's intercession was invoked for diseases of the throat in the East. As early as the eighth century, records attest to the veneration of St. Blaise in Europe, and he became one of the most popular saints in the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. Many altars were dedicated to his honor, and even the Abbey of St. Blaise in southern Germany claimed to have some of his relics.

We know more about the devotion to Saint Blaise by Christians around the world than we know about the saint himself. His feast is observed as a holy day in some Eastern Churches. In 1222, the Council of Oxford prohibited servile labor in England on Blaise's feast day. The Germans and Slavs hold him in special honor, and for decades many United States Catholics have sought the annual Saint Blaise blessing for their throats.

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