

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Forbearance is seeing blessings in the hurt and enduring it patiently and generously

Revelation 14:1-5

This excerpt contains another vision of John where he sees the faithful survive the anger of hostile powers. He sees the faithful survivors, 144,000 of them (signifying completeness, perfection and inclusiveness), as pure, without deceit, without flaw, with names of the Lamb and of his father written on their forehead (identified as God's own) rejoicing and singing hymns before the throne of God.

Psalm 24

**The Lord's is the earth and its fullness;
The world and all who dwell on it.
For he founded it upon the seas
and established upon the rivers.**

Luke 21:1-4

In the court of the women in the temple, there were thirteen collection boxes known as the trumpets. They were shaped like trumpets with the narrow part at the top and the wider part at the foot. Each was assigned to offerings for a different purpose - for the wood that was burned for sacrifice, for the incense burned on the altar, for the upkeep of the vessels and so on. It is into these that the rich were flinging their coins. Among them was a poor widow who put in "two lepta". A lepton was the smallest of coins; the name means "the thin one". Jesus said, this "thin one" outvalued all the other offerings because it was all she had. She gave from her want and not from her surplus. **She was in her gift and she was her gift.**

The value of any gift is in the spirit in which it is given and the sacrifice which it involves and above all the presence of the giver in the gift. The gift must carry something of the giver. It is not the size or the weight or the shape or the color or glitter or the glamour, but the presence of the giver in the gift that makes the gift a GIFT.

Walk softly. Give generously. Listen intensely. Speak tenderly. Pray fervently.

Saint of the Day, November 25 – St. Catherine of Alexandria and 6 other saints are remembered this day

Saint Catherine of Alexandria, or Saint Katharine of Alexandria, also known as Saint Catherine of the Wheel and The Great Martyr Saint Catherine, is, according to tradition, was martyred in the early 4th century at the hands of the pagan emperor Maxentius. According to her hagiography, she was both a princess and a noted scholar, who became a Christian around the age of 14, converted hundreds of people to Christianity, and was martyred around the age of 18. More than 1,100 years after Catherine's martyrdom, Joan of Arc identified her as one of the saints who appeared to and counselled her.

The Eastern Orthodox Church venerates her as a Great Martyr and celebrates her feast day on November 24 or 25, depending on the regional tradition. In Catholicism she is traditionally revered as one of **the Fourteen Holy Helpers*****. In 1969 the Roman Catholic Church removed her feast day from the General Roman Calendar; however, she continued to be commemorated in the Roman Martyrology on 25 November. In 2002, her feast was restored to the General Roman Calendar as an optional memorial.

*****Fourteen Holy Helpers.** Saints Acacius, Barbara, Blaise, Christopher, Cyriacus, Catherine of Alexandria, Denis, Erasmus of Formiae, Eustace, George, Giles, Margaret of Antioch, Pantaleon, and Vitus. The Fourteen Holy Helpers are a group of saints venerated together in Roman Catholicism because their intercession is believed to be particularly effective, especially against various diseases.

In the middle of the 14th century, the plague - also called "The Black Death" - also called "The Greatest Catastrophe Ever" - ravaged Europe, killing 50 million people, or about 60% of the population (a vastly higher death rate than coronavirus), within a few years. Lacking the advances of modern medicine and layering dead bodies in pits like "lasagne with layers of pasta and cheese," the people had no choice but to cling to their faith. It was at this time that the Fourteen Holy Helpers - Catholic saints, all but one of whom were early martyrs - came to be invoked by Catholics against the plague and other misfortunes.

According to New Liturgical Movement, devotion to these 14 saints started in Germany at the time of the plague, and they were called "Nothelfer," which in German means "helpers in need." As bouts of the plague resurfaced over the decades, devotion to the Holy Helpers spread to other countries, and eventually Nicholas V declared that devotion to the saints came with special indulgences.

Fr. Gus Tharappel,msfs

