

MORNING MEDITATION

The Most Sacred heart of Jesus

Simplify your life by overcoming your hunger for more and better.

Ezekiel 34:11-16

Ezekiel was a prophet in Exile. Chapter 34 is the Prophet's critique of the performance of the leaders, the shepherds of the people. The good shepherd had the well-being of his sheep in his heart. The leaders of Ezekiel's time were not concerned about the well-being of their people. They were concerned about themselves and used their power for personal gain. Ezekiel saw the exile itself as a result of the exploitation of the innocent people by their leaders. People have suffered and were scattered and exiled from their land and were forced to wander aimlessly like "sheep without shepherd" in Babylon.

Ezekiel promised a new beginning. God will replace the unfaithful and irresponsible shepherds and God himself will lead his people. God would gather his exiled and scattered people and tenderly care for them, lead them home and reestablish them as his own people again.

Psalm 23

**The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose,
Beside restful waters he leads me;
He refreshes my soul.**

Romans 5:5-11

This excerpt may be better understood if we read it from the beginning of the chapter. In Verse 5, Paul says that Christian hope will never be disappointed because "the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us". This excerpt goes on to say that we have "Peace with God" through this outpouring of the Spirit. We rejoice and we can even boast about it, because "this outpouring of the Spirit" happened even when we were still sinners. Christian hope is founded on this belief and knowledge and experience. This hope will never be disappointed.

Be men and women of hope!

Luke 15:3-7

Jesus was accused of being in the company of sinners. He told them the parable of the lost sheep. The shepherd goes out in search of one single sheep that is lost, out of a hundred, leaving the ninety nine in the wilderness. Even one single sheep is precious. The loss of that single sheep is great. The joy of discovering the lost is even greater! The shepherd invites his friends to

celebrate and share his joy of re-finding his lost sheep. So, will it be with the re-discovery of every person...the heavens rejoice!

You are not just “another” in tens or hundreds or thousands or millions - you just are! And as you are, you are precious in the eyes of God!

Great is the loss if you are lost because you are not just one in a million! You just are one unique, precious person! Greater is the joy of your re-discovery! Even the angels rejoice!

Saint of the Day, June 24 - The Nativity of St. John the Baptist and other 34 are remembered this day. (2022 – Nativity of John the Baptist was moved to June 24, 2022)

The sole biblical account of the birth of John the Baptist comes from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1. Luke tells us that the Angel Gabriel appeared to the priest Zechariah and announced that he and his wife Elizabeth would have a son and they were to name him John. Zachariah doubted the Angel’s message because Elizabeth was beyond child-bearing age and was barren. Luke also tells us that Zachariah became mute because of his doubt.

Elizabeth did conceive and deliver a son and the neighbors and relatives “rejoiced” with her. The arrival of John the Baptist was a key moment in God’s plan for the salvation of mankind through Jesus Christ. Eight days after the boy’s birth, Elizabeth and Zechariah brought him to the temple for his circumcision in accordance with the Mosaic Law. During this time, it was customary to name the child after the name of his father, Zacharias. However, Elizabeth wanted him named “John” which surprised the relatives and neighbors because “John” was not a name used within the family line. When Zachariah was asked, he wrote on a writing tablet, “His name is John”. At this, his “mouth was opened, and his tongue loosened, and he spoke, praising God.” This again surprised the relatives and neighbors and they wondered “What kind of child will this be?”

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