

# MORNING MEDITATION

## Friday, Second Week of Advent

**“We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up.”**  
(Romans 15:1-2)

### Isaiah 48:17-19

Isaiah continued to empower his people with confidence. Those who listen to God and His way will live in God’s presence - “their name will never be blotted out from my presence”. Because God will teach them what is good for them and show them the way they should walk. **Listen! Be still and know that I am God!**

### Psalm 1

**Happy the man, who follows not the counsel of the wicked,  
Nor walks in the way of sinners, nor sits in the company of the insolent,  
But delights in the Law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night.**

### Mathew 11:16-19

Jesus challenged his listeners on their attitude. No matter what was suggested, they did not respond and no matter what was offered, they found fault with it. They had an attitude problem! **Reflect on your attitude! Reflect on the need to remain open, welcoming, listening....**

John’s asceticism was called “madness” and Jesus’ sociability was named “laxness of morals”. They found ground for criticism either way. When people do not want to listen to truth, they will easily find excuse for not listening. They remain stubbornly unresponsive no matter what is offered. Grown men and women can become like “spoiled children” who refuse to play no matter what the game is, refuse to dance or sing no matter what the occasion is. **Reflect on your own quality of presence! Your responsiveness! Your openness!**

Jesus says, “Wisdom is shown to be right by her deeds” (last verse of today’s Gospel). The Jews criticized John for his ascetical life, for his isolation in the desert, but he moved men’s hearts to God as they had never been moved for centuries. They criticized Jesus for mixing too much in the ordinary and with the ordinary folks, but in him people found a new life, a new goodness, a new truth, a new power to live, a new spirit to love and a new access to God. **Reflect on how wonderful it would be if we could stop judging people and communities with our own prejudices and welcome people as they are,**

**even when their ways are different from ours!**

**Saint of the Day, December 13 - St. Lucy and 5 other saints are remembered this day.**

The oldest record of Lucy's life and martyrdom comes from the fifth-century Acts of the Martyrs. The single fact upon which various accounts agree is that a disappointed suitor accused Lucy of being a Christian, and she was executed in Syracuse, Sicily, in the year 304 during the Diocletian Persecution. Her veneration spread to Rome, and by the 6th century to the whole Church. The oldest archaeological evidence comes from the Greek inscriptions from the catacombs of St. John in Syracuse. In medieval accounts, Saint Lucy's eyes are gouged out prior to her execution.

According to the traditional story, Lucy was born of rich and noble parents about the year 283. Her father was of Roman origin. He died when she was five years old, leaving Lucy and her mother without a protective guardian. Like many of the early martyrs, Lucy had consecrated her virginity to God, and she hoped to distribute her dowry to the poor. However, Eutychia, her mother, not knowing of Lucy's promise, and suffering from a bleeding disorder, feared for Lucy's future. She arranged Lucy's marriage to a young man of a wealthy pagan family.

Saint Agatha's shrine at Catania, less than 50 miles from Syracuse, attracted a number of pilgrims; many miracles were reported to have happened through her intercession. Eutychia made a pilgrimage to Catania, in hopes of a cure. While there, St. Agatha came to Lucy in a dream and told her that because of her faith her mother would be cured and that Lucy would be the glory of Syracuse, as she (Agatha) was of Catania. With her mother cured, Lucy took the opportunity to persuade her mother to allow her to distribute a great part of her wealth among the poor.

Eutychia suggested that the sums would make a good bequest, but Lucy decided in favor of the poor. News that the patrimony and jewels were being distributed to the poor came to Lucy's betrothed, who denounced her to Paschasius, the Governor of Syracuse. Paschasius ordered her to burn a sacrifice to the emperor's image. When she refused, Paschasius sentenced her to be defiled in a brothel. Tradition states that when the guards came to take her away, they could not move her even when they hitched her to a team of oxen. Bundles of wood were then heaped about her and set on fire, but would not burn. Finally, she met her death by the sword thrust into her throat. There are other traditions and legends about Lucy's life and martyrdom.

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