MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time

**Serenity is finding quiet strength, acceptance,
and balance amid life's changes.**

Revelation 3:1-6, 14-22

This excerpt is from the letter of John to the Church in Sardis. Sardis had a reputation of living in luxury. The community had fallen into spiritual "death". John called them to wake up and strengthen their faith. He gave the Church of Laodicea a similar call.

Psalm 15

Yahweh, who has the right to enter your tent,
or to live on your holy mountain?
Those whose way of life is blameless,
who always do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart!

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus came into Jericho, a wealthy and important town, considered to be "the fattest in Palestine". Jericho was one of the greatest taxation centers. Zacchaeus was a wealthy man in Jericho, a tax collector on top in his profession. He was curious about Jesus and was determined to take a look at him. So, he climbed a tree, being small of stature, to take a look at Jesus.

Jesus saw him before Zacchaeus did and invited him to come down the tree and take him home as a guest. Zacchaeus was a changed man when he came down from the tree. He went home with Jesus and gave a wonderful testimony of the radical change that came into his life: "I give half my belongings to the poor and if I have defrauded any one in the least, I will pay back four fold".

Let the changed and renewed life be the testimony of your encounter with Christ!

Saint of the day, November 17 - St. Elizabeth of Hungary and 20 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, also known as St. Elizabeth of Thuringia, was born in Hungary on July 7, 1207 to the Hungarian King Andrew II and Gertrude of Merania. While

Elizabeth was very young, her father arranged for her to be married to Ludwig IV of Thuringia, a German nobleman.

Elizabeth's mother, Gertrude, was murdered in 1213, when Elizabeth was just six years old. From this point on, Elizabeth's perspective on life and death dramatically changed and she sought peace with prayer.

In 1221 she was formally married to Ludwig, whom she deeply loved. Together the couple had three beautiful children, two of whom became members of nobility and the third entering the religious life, becoming abbess of a German convent. Elizabeth continued to live a life full of prayer and service to the poor. Ludwig, who was now one of the rulers of Thuringia, supported all of Elizabeth's religious endeavors. She began to lead an austerely simple life, practiced penance, and devoted herself to works of charity. She used her royal position to advance her mission for charity.

In 1223, Franciscan friars arrived in Thuringia and taught 16-year-old Elizabeth all about Francis of Assisi's ideals. She then decided to live her life mirroring his. She wore simple clothing and set aside time every day to take bread to hundreds of poor people in her land. Ludwig and Elizabeth were politically powerful and lived with a remarkable generosity toward the poor.

In 1226, when disease and floods struck Thuringia, Elizabeth took to caring for the victims. It is said she even gave away the royal's clothing and goods to the afflicted people. Elizabeth had a hospital built and provided for almost a thousand poor people daily. Elizabeth's life was full of love and faith. However, tragedy struck when Ludwig passed away from illness in 1227. Elizabeth vowed to never remarry and to live a life similar to a nun, despite pressure from relatives. Elizabeth's life was consumed deeply by her devotion to God and her charitable work. She passed away at the age of 24, on November 17, 1231 in Marburg, Hesse.

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