

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**Free from all thoughts of 'I' and 'mine', a man finds absolute peace.
(Bhagavad Gita)**

1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-30

Solomon prayed for his people in the temple, in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel. This excerpt gives us the honor that he gave to God, followed by his prayer for his people.

Psalm 84

**My soul yearns and pines for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest in which she puts her young -
Your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God!**

Mark 7:1-13

The Pharisees and some of the experts in the law gathered around Jesus and questioned him about the disciples violating some of the traditions and customs. Jesus spoke to them about how they had made an art of observing details of the law while ignoring the very purpose of the law.

For their guidance of life, they did not depend on listening to God - they depended on clever arguments and debates, ingenious interpretations of legal experts. They nullified God's law in favor of their traditions and practices.

Such cleverness can never be the basis of true religion. True religion can never be the product of man's mind.

True religion must come, not from man's ingenious discoveries, but from the simple and humble listening to and acceptance of the voice of God.

Never allow rules to paralyze the claim of love.

Customs, traditions, rules and regulations that prevent us from helping others in need, are inconsistent with the law of God.

Saint of the Day, February 10 – St. Scholastica and 104 other saints are remembered this day.

Scholastica and her twin brother were born around 480 in Nursia, Umbria, Italy of wealthy parents. She and her brother Benedict were brought up together until the time he left to pursue studies in Rome. Twins often share the same interests and ideas with an equal intensity. Scholastica and her twin brother, Benedict, established religious communities within a few miles from each other. Little is known of Scholastica's early life. She founded a religious community for women near Monte Cassino at Plombariola, five miles from where her brother governed a monastery.

The twins visited each other once a year in a farmhouse because Scholastica was not permitted inside the monastery. They spent these times discussing spiritual matters. According to the Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great, the brother and sister spent their last day together in prayer and conversation. Scholastica sensed her death was close at hand and she begged Benedict to stay with her until the next day. He refused her request because he did not want to spend a night outside the monastery, thus breaking his own Rule. Scholastica asked God to let her brother remain and a severe thunderstorm broke out, preventing Benedict and his monks from returning to the abbey.

Benedict cried out, "God forgive you, Sister. What have you done?" Scholastica replied, "I asked a favor of you and you refused. I asked it of God, and he granted it." Brother and sister parted the next morning after their long discussion. Three days later, February 10, 543, Benedict was praying in his monastery and saw the soul of his sister rising heavenward in the form of a white dove. Benedict then announced the death of his sister to the monks and later buried her in the tomb he had prepared for himself.

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