

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time

**My lips will glorify you because Your loving kindness is better than life.
I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.**

(Psalm 63:3-4)

2 Maccabees 6:18-31

Eleazar, an aging scribe was forced to eat pork, unclean meat according to their law. He preferred to die rather than break the law of cleanliness. He refused to disobey God's law, as he understood. He refused even to pretend to eat to satisfy the demands of the king. Knowing that he would die and with great courage, he accepted torture rather than disobey the law. He said as he accepted torture, "by manfully giving up my life now, I will prove myself worthy of my old age and I will leave to the young a noble example of how to die willingly and generously for the revered and holy laws". He became a model of courage and fidelity to all of Israel.

Be courageous! Be strong! Stand your ground!

Psalm 3

**You, O Lord, are my shield;
My glory, you lift up my head!
When I call out to the Lord,
He answered me from his holy mountain.**

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 21 - Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and 11 other saints are remembered this day.

The feast of the presentation of Mary dates back to the 6th century in the East and the 15th century in the West. It is based on an ancient tradition that Mary was taken to the temple in Jerusalem when she was 3-years-old and dedicated to God. A church was built there in honor of this mystery. The Eastern Church was more interested in the feast, but it does appear in the West in the 11th century and became a feast of the universal Church in the 16th century.

We read about Mary's birth and of her presentation in the temple only in apocryphal literature. The Gospel of James (unrecognized as historical) tells us that Anna and Joachim offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was 3 years old. This was to carry out a promise made to God when Anna was still childless. Though it cannot be proven historically, Mary's presentation has an important theological purpose. It continues the impact of the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of the birth of Mary. It emphasizes that the holiness conferred on Mary from the beginning of her life on earth continued through her early childhood and beyond.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs