

MORNING MEDITATION

Thursday, Thirtieth Week in Ordinary Time

**When you do the good, the right and wise thing, you find peace
and serenity and so it again and again if you choose to be peaceful
and serene.**

Ephesians 6:10-20

Paul encouraged the Ephesians to draw strength from the Lord and stand firm against evil designs. The struggle is not with human forces, but with the powers of darkness. So, he says, “stand fast with truth as the belt around your waist and justice as the breastplate and zeal as your footgear”. Let your faith be your shield in all circumstances. And pray at every opportunity.

Stand your ground and let your faith carry you through all testing and trying moments.

Psalms 144

**Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
Who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war,
My refuge and my fortress, my stronghold, my deliverer,
My shield in whom I trust.**

Luke 13:31-35

The Pharisees were hostile to Jesus. But some of them came to warn him about how Herod was trying to kill him. This shows us that all Pharisees were not hostile and unsympathetic to Jesus. We tend to put all people together into one category and pass judgments about them.

Be open and non-judgmental. Look beyond what you see and hear! Each person is unique. Learn to know, appreciate and respect each person as he/she is!

This excerpt is one of the passages that show how little we know about Jesus and how little even the Gospels tell us about him. Here, we find him deeply disturbed, distressed, disappointed, sad, hurt, even angry.....and pouring out from what is deeply inside of him.....we find his courage, compassion and tenderness...all expressed in real lament for Jerusalem.

Be in touch with your passions! Listen to your heart! Discern your passions!

Saint of the Day, October 29 - St. Narcissus of Jerusalem and 180 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Narcissus was born towards the end of the first century around the year 99. He was almost 80-years-old when he was placed at the head of the church of Jerusalem, making him the 30th bishop of that see. In the year 195, he and Theophilus, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, presided together in a council of the bishops of Palestine held at Caesarea regarding the time Easter is celebrated. It was then decreed that the feast of Easter is to be kept always on a Sunday.

Three persistent sinners, fearing Narcissus' severity in the observance of religious discipline, accused him of an unimaginable crime. The sinners maintained they were telling the truth by adding additional security into their claims. If they were not speaking the truth, one wished he might perish by fire, another, that he might be struck with a leprosy, and the third, that he might lose his sight.

Nevertheless, their accusations were found to be false and Divine Retribution was called upon them. The first was burnt in his house, along with his whole family, by an accidental fire in the night. The second was struck with a universal leprosy; and the third, terrified by these examples, confessed the conspiracy and slander, and by the abundance of tears which he continually shed for his sins, lost his sight before his death.

Soon after, Narcissus decided to leave Jerusalem for a life of solitude. His reasons for doing so weren't clear. Some believed he left because he could not bear the shock of the bold slander, and others believed leaving had always been his wish. He spent several years undiscovered in his retreat, where he enjoyed all the happiness and advantage which a close conversation with God can bestow. After he departed, the neighboring bishops chose a new pastor for Narcissus' church until he decided to return.

Once Narcissus returned, years later, the faithful rejoiced and convinced Narcissus to once again assume the administration of the diocese. He accepted. As Narcissus started to reach an extreme old age, he made St. Alexander his coadjutor. A coadjutor is a bishop appointed to assist a diocesan bishop, and often also designated as his successor. St. Narcissus continued to serve his flock, and even other churches, by his diligent prayers and his earnest exhortations to unity and concord, as St. Alexander testifies in his letter to the Arsinoites in Egypt, where he says that Narcissus was at that time about 116 years old. St. Narcissus passed away soon after in AD 216, at the age of 117.

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