

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, First Week of Lent

Those who practice forbearance develop strong will power.

Isaiah 55:10-11

Chapter 55 of Isaiah invites us to come to God, to listen to God's wisdom, to be fed and nourished on God's word of wisdom, to renounce the way of foolishness and wickedness and to turn to God and God's ways. The prophet says, God's ways are not our ways. So seek the Lord and his ways!

God's word is alive, active and dynamic. God's word is faithful word and the word will become fruitful and life-giving. **Nourish and strengthen yourselves with God's word.**

Psalm 34

**Glorify the Lord with me,
Let us together extol his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me,
And delivered me from all my fears.**

Mathew 6:7-15

This is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. Begin prayer by addressing God "Father". Come into the presence of someone who need not be forced to give, but to a Father who simply gives. Reverence to God must be first, before all else.

The first "three" petitions are about reverence for God - holy be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done. God first. All other things will then fall in their proper places.

Prayer should not be our attempt to bend God's will to our desires - but must be a surrender of our will to Gods' will - bringing our will into harmony with God's will.

The second "three" petitions are about our needs, and they cover all life: praying for the essential needs (daily bread) for the day; forgiveness for sin of the past; help for meeting the testing times in the future.

Bring the whole of life – your present, past and future - before God.

Saint of the Day, February 20 – St. Jacinta & Francisco Marto and 20 other saints are remembered this day.

Saint Francisco de Jesus Marto (June 11, 1908 – April 4, 1919), his sister Saint Jacinta de Jesus Marto (March 11, 1910 – February 20, 1920) and their cousin Lúcia dos Santos (1907–2005) were children from Aljustrel, a small hamlet near Fátima, Portugal, who witnessed three apparitions of the Angel of Peace in 1916 and several apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Cova da Iria in 1917. At that time, Europe was involved in an extremely bloody war. Portugal itself was in political turmoil, having overthrown its monarchy in 1910; the government disbanded religious organizations soon after.

At the first appearance, Mary asked the children to return to that spot on the thirteenth of each month for the next six months. She also asked them to learn to read and write and to pray the rosary “to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war.” They were to pray for sinners and for the conversion of Russia, which had recently overthrown Czar Nicholas II and was soon to fall under communism. Up to 90,000 people gathered for Mary’s final apparition on October 13, 1917. The title Our Lady of Fátima was given to the Virgin Mary as a result, and the Sanctuary of Fátima became a major center of world Christian pilgrimage.

Less than two years later, Francisco died of influenza in his family home. He was buried in the parish cemetery and then re-buried in the Fátima basilica in 1952. Jacinta died of influenza in Lisbon in 1920, offering her suffering for the conversion of sinners, peace in the world, and the Holy Father. She was re-buried in the Fátima basilica in 1951. Their cousin Lúcia dos Santos, became a Carmelite nun and was still living when Jacinta and Francisco were beatified in 2000; she died five years later. Pope Francis canonized the younger children on his visit to Fátima to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first apparition, May 13, 2017.

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