

## **MORNING MEDITATION**

### **Thursday, Second Week of Advent**

**It is crucial to know your life purpose  
because it directs your daily decisions**

#### **Isaiah 41:13-20**

Isaiah called his people to trust in the Lord who is the author of all and whose ways are beyond human understanding. Difficult times have been there and may continue to be there, but the God of Israel will not abandon his people.....difficult times will be transformed into times of joy and fulfillment.... Yahweh will “turn the desert into marshland and the dry ground into springs of water”. God will redeem and heal and transform his people again. **Trust in the Lord and cast your cares into his hands.**

#### **Psalms 145**

**I will extol you, O my God and King,  
And I will bless your name forever and ever.  
The Lord is good to all  
And compassionate toward all his works.**

#### **Matthew 11:11-15**

Jesus paid a tremendous tribute to John the Baptist, “history has not known a man born of woman who is greater than John the Baptist”. And his greatness consisted in “being a prophet and even more....” A prophet is the man with a message from God and the man with courage to deliver the message. The Prophet is the man with God’s wisdom in his mind, God’s truth on his lips and God’s courage in his heart. And that’s who John was. It was his role, his duty, his mission to announce the coming of the messiah, the coming of the kingdom. John was the herald of God and there is no greater mission than that.....

**Reflect on how you share this prophetic role: God’s wisdom in your mind.....God’s truth on your lips.....God’s courage in your heart.....**

Jesus said, “The least born into the kingdom is greater than John”. John was not privileged to know what the disciples came to know and what we know today. He didn’t know the love of God revealed in its fullness in Jesus in his death on the cross. John was not privileged to see the heart of God the way we have come to see today in and through Jesus. Jesus would say to the disciples later, “many prophets longed to see what you see and did not see it, to hear what you hear and did not hear it....”

**Reflect on how privileged you are! How Blessed and Graced you are!**

## **Saint of the Day, December 11 - St. Damasus I and 15 other saints are remembered this day.**

Pope Damasus I was born in Rome around the year 305. Damasus' parents were Antonius, who became a priest at the Church of St. Lawrence (San Lorenzo) in Rome, and his wife Laurentia. Damasus began his ecclesiastical career as a deacon in his father's church, where he went on to serve as a priest. This Church later became the basilica of Saint Lawrence outside the Walls in Rome.

During Damasus' early years, Constantine I ruled the Western Roman Empire. As emperor, he issued the Edict of Milan (313), which granted religious freedom to Christians in all parts of the Roman Empire. When Pope Liberius was banished by Emperor Constantius II to Berea in 354, Damasus was archdeacon of the Roman church and followed Liberius into exile, though he immediately returned to Rome. During the period before Liberius' return, Damasus had a great share in the government of the church.

Following the death of Pope Liberius on September 24, 366, Damasus succeeded to the Papacy amidst factional violence. He faced accusations of murder and adultery with a married woman in his early years as Pope. He was active in defending the Catholic Church against the threat of schisms. In two Roman synods (368 and 369) he condemned Apollinarianism and Macedonianism and sent legates to the First Council of Constantinople that was convoked in 381 to address these heresies.

One of the important works of Pope Damasus was to preside in the Council of Rome of 382 that determined the canon or official list of Sacred Scripture. He appointed St Jerome as his confidential secretary. Jerome spent three years (382–385) in Rome in close interaction with Pope Damasus and the leading Christians. In order to put an end to the marked divergences in the western texts of that period, Damasus encouraged Jerome to revise the available Old Latin versions of the Bible into a more accurate Latin on the basis of the Greek New Testament and the Septuagint, resulting in the Vulgate.

Damasus also did much to encourage the veneration of the Christian martyrs restoring and creating access to their tombs in the Catacombs of Rome and elsewhere, and setting up tablets with verse inscriptions composed by himself. Damasus rebuilt or repaired his father's church, Saint Lawrence, known as "St Lawrence outside the walls". His pontificate lasted eighteen years and two months.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs