

MORNING MEDITATION

Wednesday, Thirtieth Week in Ordinary Time

We all have a purpose in life, and when you find yours, give it all you got.

Romans 8:26-30

Paul tells the Christians in Rome that God knows all our weaknesses, even how difficult it is for us to pray. So, he gives us his spirit to help us in our weakness. Since we do not know how to pray as we should, the spirit prays in us, expresses our innermost longings.

God makes all things work together for the good of those whom he has called. So, listen to the spirit and move with the spirit as the spirit moves.

Psalms 13

**Look upon me, answer me, Lord, my God!
Give light to my eyes lest I sleep in death,
Lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed,"
lest my foes rejoice at my downfall.**

Luke 13:22-30

Jesus was asked whether only a few would be saved. Behind this question was the belief that only Jews would be saved and not the gentiles. Jesus responded by telling them that entrance into the kingdom is not automatic...membership in the Jewish community or any faith community did not guarantee entrance into the kingdom. He called them to make difficult choices and make the difficult journey....the door is narrow, he said. He himself was making his way to Jerusalem to face rejection and eventual death.

Jesus challenges us to make difficult choices, make the difficult journey, walk the path of trials, face testing times, enter through the narrow door.....the way to the kingdom is not easy, but it is just the right way, the way made to fit our needs!

From the beginning of scriptures, we read about great men and women called to make these difficult choices and they in turn called their people to make hard choices. Moses and the prophets and finally Jesus offered people choices between life and death; way of the just and way of the wicked; good and bad; foolishness and wisdom.....

Pray for wisdom to discern and make good and wise choices and the courage to be faithful to the choices you make.

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 a wish of his. 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.

Fr. Gus Tharappel,msfs