

MORNING MEDITATION

Thursday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**Meet this transient world with neither grasping nor fear,
trust the unfolding of life and you will attain true serenity.**
(Bhagavad Gita)

1 Kings 11:4-13

In his old age, influenced by his wives, Solomon turned to other gods. He built high places for the gods of all his foreign wives. Solomon thus became unfaithful to the Covenant, unfaithful to the heritage of his faith, unfaithful to his ancestral traditions, unfaithful to his roots. This excerpt from the book of Kings gives the unfaithfulness of Solomon as the reason for the breakdown of the kingdom.

Be faithful to all your commitments. Lack of faithfulness causes brokenness within, in families and in communities.

Psalms 106

**Happy are they, who observe what is right,
Who do always what is just.
Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people,
Visit us with your saving help.**

Mark: 7:24-30

Jesus went to the territory of Tyre and Sidon, to the Gentile territory... began to break down barriers between Jews and Gentiles...**Be a welcoming person. Be open to other cultures and traditions.**

He met a Syrophenician woman. She refused to take "NO" for an answer. She was a woman with a tragedy of an ill daughter at home. Her faith was real. Her faith was tested and her prayer was answered. What the Jews threw away, the gentiles accepted! This woman stood strong, persevered, persisted.....this is hope alive! She came with passionate hope and refused to be discouraged! **Be strong! Stand your ground! Be patient! And persevere in your efforts.**

She had a sense of humor and she could fall back on it in the face of what seemed to be an insult. She had an urgent need, she was in the midst of trouble, she could have felt the insult, but with a little sense of humor, she persisted with unconquerable hope...

May you be blessed with hope in the face of difficult situations! Bless others with a smile on your face when you feel insulted!

Saint of the day, February 12 - St. Apollonia and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

We have no knowledge of the early life of Apollonia. She was martyred in the year 249 for not renouncing her faith during the reign of Emperor Philip. The persecution of Christians began in Alexandria during the reign of the Emperor Philip. The first victim of the pagan mob was an old man named Metrius, who was tortured and then stoned to death. The second person who refused to worship their false idols was a Christian woman named Quinta. Her words infuriated the mob and she was scourged and stoned.

While most of the Christians were fleeing the city, abandoning all their worldly possessions, an old deaconess, Apollonia, was seized. The crowds beat her, knocking out all of her teeth. Then they lit a large fire and threatened to throw her in it if she did not curse her God. She begged them to wait a moment, acting as if she was considering their requests. Instead, she jumped willingly into the flames and so suffered martyrdom. The account of the life of St. Apollonia was written by St. Dionysius to Fabian, Bishop of Antioch. She is considered the patron of dental diseases and is often invoked by those with toothaches. Ancient art depicts her with a golden tooth at the end of her necklace. Also in art, she is seen with pincers holding a tooth.

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