

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Second Week of Advent

**Simplicity is a virtue most worthy of love, because it leads us straight to the kingdom of God, and, at the same time, wins the affection of men.
(Saint Vincent de Paul)**

Isaiah 35:1-10

Isaiah shares his vision of extraordinary prosperity and peace. Yahweh will deliver his people from bondage and restore them to their original dignity and glory. God will break in and usher in new beginnings...the blind will see, the deaf will hear, the lame will walk, the dumb will speak.... great and wonderful things will happen because God is breaking in. So, be strong and trust in God and wait in hope!

Psalms 85

**Kindness and truth shall meet.
Justice and peace shall kiss.
Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And justice shall look down from heaven.....**

Luke 5:17-26

This excerpt is the story of the paralyzed man who was lowered through the roof by his friends because there was no other way to bring him before Jesus. The paralyzed man was saved by his friends! The man was paralyzed, and his friends cared.

Reflect on various kinds of paralysis that need healing! Reflect on what caring friends can do to bring about healing! Reflect on what you can do to bring someone to Christ for healing, for forgiveness, for compassion, for a transformation of life!

Nothing stopped his friends from bringing the paralyzed man to Jesus!

What stops you from bringing yourself or someone else to Christ? OR may be, just a little closer to Christ? Reflect on going up the roof and coming down through the roof in front of Jesus in the middle of the crowd! What does it mean to you?

Many of us are saved by the faith of those who love us. We owe much to the faith and love of those who really cared. BE GRATEFUL!

Prayerfully remember those precious influences in your own personal life that brought you to Christ, that brought you closer to Christ, that still calls you to come closer!

Saint of the Day, December 5 - St. Sabas and 16 other saints are remembered this day.

Sabas was born at Mutalaska, Cappadocia, near Caesarea in 439. He was the son of an army officer, who left him in the care of an uncle. Mistreated by his uncle's wife, Sabas ran away to another uncle, though he was only eight. When the two uncles became involved in a lawsuit over his estate, he again ran away, this time to a monastery near Mutalaska. In 456, he went to Jerusalem and there entered a monastery under St. Theoctistus. When he was thirty, he became a hermit under the guidance of St. Euthymius, and after Euthymius' death, spent four years alone in the desert near Jericho.

Despite his desire for solitude, he attracted many disciples. When his one hundred fifty monks asked for a priest and despite his opposition to monks being ordained, he was obliged to accept ordination by Patriarch Sallust of Jerusalem in 491. He attracted disciples from Egypt and Armenia, allowed them a liturgy in their own tongue, and built several hospitals and another monastery near Jericho.

While functioning as abbot among a large community of monks, he felt ever called to live the life of a hermit. Each year, in Lent, he left his monks for long periods of time. A group of 60 men left the monastery, settling at a nearby ruined facility. When Sabas learned of the difficulties they were facing, he generously gave them supplies and assisted in the repair of their church.

Over the years, Sabas traveled throughout Palestine, preaching the true faith and successfully bringing back many to the Church. At the age of 91, in response to a plea from the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Sabas undertook a journey to Constantinople in conjunction with the Samaritan revolt and its violent repression. He fell ill and soon after his return, died at the monastery at Mar Saba on December 5, 532. Today the monastery is still inhabited by monks of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and Saint Sabas is regarded as one of the most noteworthy figures of early monasticism.

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