

MORNING MEDITATION

Wednesday, Third Week of Easter

**Dear Lord, grant us the gift of forbearance
that we may be patient as we search for your will and purpose for us.**

Acts 8:1-8

Stephen was stoned to death and he became the first Christian Martyr. Great persecution began, led by Saul, and many men and women were thrown into jail. However, the apostles with great courage and wisdom continued their mission of proclaiming the good news of the resurrection of Jesus, preaching God's Word and healing the sick.

**Be strong! Stand your ground! Be men and women of courage and hope and virtue
and the good news of the risen Jesus.**

Psalm 66

**Shout joyfully to God all you on earth,
Sing praise to the glory of his name;
Proclaim his glorious praise.....
Let all the earth worship and sing praise to you.....**

John 6:35-40

Jesus continued to call them to trust him and take him into their life. He told his listeners that he was the bread of life; that no one who comes to him will ever be hungry or thirsty; that no one who turns to him will ever be rejected by his Father; that he came to do the will of the Father and that it was the will of the Father that everyone who believes in the son would have eternal life.

**We are called to turn to the risen Jesus and welcome him into our life and let his
word, his way, his truth, his life, his values and his attitudes transform our life.**

**We are called to trust that Jesus will feed us with his life, sustain us and bring us into
life eternal.**

We are called to trust that in him, through him and with him, we will never be lost.

Saint of the Day, April 17 - St. Benedict Joseph Labre and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Benedict Joseph Labre was born on March 25, 1748 in the village of Amettes, in northern France. He was the eldest of fifteen children of a prosperous shopkeeper, Jean-Baptiste Labre, and his wife, Anne Grandsire. At the age of sixteen, he approached his uncle, a parish priest, about becoming a Trappist monk, but his parents told him he would have to wait until he grew older. When Benedict was about eighteen, an epidemic fell upon the city, and uncle and nephew busied themselves in the service of the sick. While the uncle took care of the souls and bodies of the people, Benedict cared for the cattle. His uncle was among the last victims of the epidemic.

Benedict Joseph Labre tried to join the religious orders of the Trappists, the Carthusians and the Cistercians, but did not come up to their requirements. He was under age, he was too delicate; he had no special recommendations. Then, at age 18, a profound change took place. Benedict lost his desire to study and gave up all thoughts of the priesthood. He became a pilgrim, traveling from one great shrine to another, living off alms. He wore the rags of a beggar and shared his food with the poor. Filled with the love of God and neighbor, Benedict had special devotion to the Blessed Mother and to the Blessed Sacrament. In Rome, where he lived in the Colosseum for a time, he was called "the poor man of the Forty Hours devotion" and "the beggar of Rome." The people accepted his ragged appearance better than he did. His excuse to himself was that "our comfort is not in this world."

On April 16, 1783, the last day of his life, Benedict dragged himself to a church in Rome and prayed there for two hours before he collapsed, dying peacefully in a nearby house. Immediately after his death, the people proclaimed him a saint. Benedict Joseph Labre was canonized by Pope Leo XIII in 1881.

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