MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, Thirty-first Week in Ordinary Time

Peace is the simplicity of heart, serenity of mind, tranquility of soul, the bond of love.

(Pio of Pietrelcina)

Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

Paul invited the Philippians to be fellow imitators of Christ. He also encouraged them to be aware of those whose lives were scandalous and not follow them because "our citizenship is in heaven". Paul was saying to them that they must never forget that they are citizens of heaven and that their conduct must match their citizenship.

Remember who you are! You are fellow citizens with the saints! Be faithful to your calling!

He instructed them to "stand fast in the Lord". The meaning of "Stand Fast" as Paul uses is like the soldier "standing fast" in battle with the enemy surging down upon him.

Be strong! Stand fast in the Lord! Be rooted and growing in the Lord!

Psalm 122

I rejoiced because they said to me,
"We will go up to the house of the Lord."
And now we have set foot
within your gate, O Jerusalem.

Luke 16:1-8

Jesus told them the parable of an enterprising manager who was about to be dismissed. The manager used his "practical (economic) wisdom" to deal with the crisis of being fired from his job. His employer praised him for being enterprising and Jesus held him out as an example to his disciples - not because he abused his employer's wealth, but because he used his wisdom to gain friends for himself for a future time of need.

Then Jesus called his disciples to higher values. He called them to use material possessions to build relationships, friendships, fellowship, and communion with others.

He called them to be honest and trustworthy in all relationships, even in dealing with material things. He called them to be honest in using material things, which are God's gifts. All possessions are God's gifts for the good of the community.

You cannot serve both God and possessions. We are at the service of God and possessions are at our service.

Saint of the Day, November 6 - St. Nicholas Tavelic and Companions and 19 other saints are remembered this day

St. Nicholas Tavelic and his three companions were martyred in the Holy Land in 1391. Nicholas and his three companions are among the 158 Franciscans who have been martyred in the Holy Land since the friars became custodians of the shrines in 1335.

Nicholas was born in 1340 to a wealthy and noble family in Croatia. He joined the Franciscans, and was sent with Deodat of Rodez to preach in Bosnia. In 1384, they volunteered for the Holy Land missions and were sent there. They looked after the holy places, cared for the Christian pilgrims, and studied Arabic.

In 1391, Nicholas, Deodat, Peter of Narbonne, and Stephen of Cuneo decided to take a direct approach to converting the Muslims. On November 11, they went to the huge Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem and asked to see the Qadix - Muslim official. Reading from a prepared statement, they said that all people must accept the gospel of Jesus. When they were ordered to retract their statement, they refused. After beatings and imprisonment, they were beheaded before a large crowd. While their method of evangelization is different from what we would use today, their zeal and courage are evident in their actions Nicholas and his companions were canonized in 1970. They are the only Franciscans martyred in the Holy Land to be canonized.

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