

MORNING MEDITATION

Thirty-Second Monday in Ordinary Time

Hospitality exists when you believe the other person is on your side!

Wisdom 1:1-7

The book of Wisdom, written about 100 B.C. by a wise person of the Jewish community in Alexandria addresses the most popular theme of the day, “Divine Wisdom”. The author begins the book by calling people to “love justice.....remember the Lord’s goodness.....and seeks the Lord in integrity of heart.....” Because God is the witness of man’s inmost self!

Psalm 139

**O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
You know when I sit and when I stand;
You understand my thoughts from afar.....**

Luke 17:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples, scandals will happen! But do not scandalize anyone. Learn to correct your brother. But be generous and gracious and learn to forgive.

Christian standard of forgiveness must immeasurably exceed the best the world can achieve!

Be careful not send a younger or weaker person on the wrong way!

Jesus had offered several challenges to his disciples (Luke 16 - 17). Faced with these overwhelming challenges, the apostles asked Jesus for an “increase of faith”. The imageries of mustard seed and sycamore tree seem to imply that the apostles possessed the “gift” of faith. All they had to do was to live it, unwrap the gift they had, translate it into action and see to its maintenance and care - they had to nurture it and give it life.

Fr. Gus Tharappel,msfs

St. Martin of Tours (316-397) and 15 other saints are remembered this day.

Martin was born in 316 or 336 in Savaria in the Diocese of Pannonia, Hungary. His father was a senior officer (tribune) in the Roman army. At the age of ten he attended the Church against the wishes of his parents and became a catechumen. At the age of fifteen, Martin was required to follow his father into the cavalry corps of the Roman military. Scholars think he served as part of the emperor's guard.

As a young soldier, Martin encountered a beggar who was unclothed and it was very cold. Martin removed his cloak, cut it in half, gave this half to the beggar and dressed himself with the other half. That night, Martin had a vision in which Christ spoke to him, "Martin, a mere catechumen has clothed me." About the age of 20, Martin made clear to his superiors that he would no longer fight, following his formed Christian conscience. "I am a soldier for Christ. It is not lawful for me to fight". With these words Martin of Tours identified himself forever as a saint of peace before the emperor. Today, he would be called a conscientious objector. Martin laid down his weapons and spent the rest of his life serving Christ with great compassion for the poor and the suffering people as the bishop of the city of Tours. Martin was so loved as a man of compassion and peace that he was the first person to be honored as saint who was not a martyr.

In 371, the city of Tours needed a new bishop and the people decided to call Martin to the office. Martin did not want the job so the people decided to trick him into the office. The people insisted he was needed to administer to someone sick. So, he came out as quickly as he could. When he learned it was a trick to make him a bishop, he tried to hide. He was quickly discovered and the people called him forward to be ordained to the office of Bishop. Even though he did not really want the office, he was ordained - and he became a holy and hardworking Bishop.

Martin was a good pastor and shepherd of the people. As a Bishop, he established a system of parishes to manage his diocese. He made a point to visit each parish at least once per year. Yet, he longed for more prayer and wanted to pursue a monastic life. In the year 372 Martin established an abbey at Marmoutier so he could retreat there and live as a monk with the many disciples he had attracted.

Martin died in Candes-Saint-Martin, Gaul in 397. Saint Martin is the patron of the poor, soldiers, conscientious objectors, tailors, and winemakers. He commonly appears on horseback and is shown cutting his cloak in half with a sword.