

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Twenty Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**The smallest things we do to thank people for what they have been to us
will touch their lives more than we will ever know.**

Ezra 1:1-6

Ezra gave his people a spiritual unity without which the small Jewish community that had just returned from exile would never have survived. In the reading of today, Ezra speaks of how God inspired the Persian King Cyrus to build the temple. The very purpose of the temple was to gather the people around Yahweh and bring them into a spiritual communion, which always was the strength of the Jewish community wherever they were. He called them to the ideal of the Torah - God's law.

Never be ashamed of the ideal, the vision that unites. Be faithful to the ideal which keeps you in communion with God and others!

Psalm 126

**Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing.
Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown,
They shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.**

Luke 8:16-18

Jesus invited his listeners to let their light shine. Hard it may be, never be ashamed of giving witness to who you are and whose you are and whom you serve! Let your goodness be visible in the way you live out your life. Be humble but never be ashamed of showing who you are!

We can't all be shining examples. But we can, at least, twinkle a little!

Jesus spoke of the impossibility of secrecy! We try to hide certain things from ourselves, certain things from others and certain things, even from God! Happy is the person with nothing to hide!

Jesus spoke to them about the laws of increase and decrease. The man who has will get more and the man who has not, will lose even the little he thinks he has! Another way of expressing it would be: there is no standing still in life! Life is dynamic and it moves, changes, grows or weakens - there is no standing still!

Saint of the Day, September 20 - St. Andrew Kim Tae-gon, St. Paul Chong Ha-sang and 8100 saints are remembered this day.

Saint Andrew Kim Taegon generally referred to as Saint Andrew Kim in English, was the first Korean-born Catholic priest and is the patron saint of Korea. Christianity came to Korea during the Japanese invasion in 1592. During this time a small number of Koreans were baptized, probably by Japanese soldiers who were Christians. Soon after, Korea cut itself off from the rest of the world.

When a Chinese priest secretly arrived about 12 years later, he found 4,000 Catholics who had never seen a priest. Korea's first Christian community was made up entirely of laypeople! Between 1839 and 1867, there were fierce persecutions. One hundred three members of this community were martyred along with three bishops and seven priests from the Paris Foreign Mission Society.

Andrew Kim Taegon was the son of converts, born on August 21, 1821. His father, a farmer, was also martyred. Andrew was baptized when he was 15. He then attended the seminary in Macao, China, 1,300 miles away from home. After six years Andrew returned to Korea and assumed the job of bringing missionaries into the country secretly. Almost immediately he was arrested, tortured, and beheaded on September 16, 1846.

On May 6, 1984, Pope John Paul II canonized Kim along with 102 other Korean Martyrs, including Paul Chong Hasang, during his trip to Korea.

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