

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

## **Wednesday, Second Week in Ordinary Time**

**Slow down! Close your eyes! Take a deep breath! Open your eyes!  
Behold, you are still here!**

### **1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51**

This excerpt describes David's character as a man of deep personal faith in God. "The Lord, who delivered me from the claws of the lion and the bear, will also keep me safe from the clutches of this philistine. Saul blessed him and sent him to fight the philistines. David struck Goliath down with his sling and the philistines took this as sign of God's protection of Israel.

**Trust in the Lord's abiding, protecting and guiding presence in your life. May the Lord keep you safe in the circle of his love!**

### **Psalm 144**

**Blessed be the Lord my rock,  
Who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war.  
My refuge and my fortress,  
My stronghold, my deliverer....**

### **Mark 3:1-6**

Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on a Sabbath while the Pharisees kept a careful watch over Jesus to trap him with anything that could be used against him.

**Jesus gave the man with the withered hand his health, his dignity, his self-respect and work for his living. Sabbath was not a barrier for Jesus to restore someone's dignity and worth, to heal and bring wholeness.**

To the Pharisee, religion was ritual; it meant obeying certain rules and regulations. One could be very religious without being sensitive to human needs, blind to the tears of the world around.

**To Jesus, religion had to find its way into service, into the care of human beings. Religion was love of God and of people in life, in practice.**

To Jesus, the most important thing was not correct performance of rituals, but spontaneous response to human needs. Ritual was irrelevant compared with love in action. **There is no time so sacred that it cannot be used for helping people in need.**

**Saint of the Day, January 22**

## **St Vincent of Zaragoza and 19 others are remembered this day.**

Vincent was born at Huesca, near Saragossa, Spain during the latter part of the 3rd century, the actual date is not known. He spent most of his life in the city of Saragossa, where he was educated and ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Valerius of Saragossa, who commissioned Vincent to preach throughout the diocese. Because Valerius suffered from a speech impediment, Vincent acted as his spokesman.

When the Roman Emperor Diocletian began persecuting Christians in Spain, both were brought before the Roman governor, Dacian in Valencia. Vincent and his bishop Valerius were confined to the prison of Valencia. Though he was finally offered release if he would consign Scripture to the fire, Vincent refused. Speaking on behalf of his bishop, he informed the judge that they were ready to suffer everything for their faith, and that they could pay no heed either to threats or promises.

His outspoken manner so angered the governor that Vincent was inflicted every sort of torture on him. He was stretched on the rack and his flesh torn with iron hooks. Then his wounds were rubbed with salt and he was burned alive upon a red-hot gridiron. Finally, he was cast into prison and laid on a floor scattered with broken pottery, where he died. During his martyrdom he preserved such peace and tranquility that it astonished his jailer, who repented from his sins and was converted. Vincent's dead body was thrown into the sea in a sack, but was later recovered by the Christians and his veneration immediately spread throughout the Church. The aged bishop Valerius was exiled.

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