

MORNING MEDITATION

Saints Cornelius and Cyprian, Martyrs

**Everything we do, big and small, to show gratitude
matters to those who have been good to us.**

I Timothy 4:12-16

Paul encourages all who are called to a life of ministry to concentrate on the Scriptures, to preaching and teaching. He encourages us today with following simple thoughts:

Be a continuing example of love, faith and purity!

Do not neglect the gifts you have received!

Attend to your duties, watch yourself and watch your teaching!

Psalm 111

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
prudent are all who live by it.
His praise endures forever.

Luke 7:36-50

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him. A woman known to be a sinner in town came and anointed his feet with perfumed oil. Jesus used this occasion to teach certain important values. One thing which shuts a person from relationships with God or with another is self-sufficiency. When you are self-sufficient, you do not need another and then there is no need to relate.

The story of Simon the Pharisee and the sinful woman demonstrates a contrast between two attitudes - one of self-sufficiency and the other of a sense of need; one of being filled and the other of real hunger and blessed is the one who is hungry - "the hungry shall be satisfied"

A sense of sin, of incompleteness, of personal inadequacies makes it possible for a person to open himself/herself to GRACE. Self-righteousness closes the mind and the heart where no light can enter.

Be open. Be sensitive. Be aware of your incompleteness. Be at ease with your incompleteness. Keep hungering for the food that nurtures you into the eternal.

Saint of the Day, September 16 - St. Cornelius and 14 other saints are remembered this day

We do not have information about the birth and early life of St. Cornelius. He was Pope, the bishop of Rome from March 251 to his martyrdom in June 253. After the martyrdom of St. Fabian, there was no Pope for fourteen months because of the persecution. During this period, the Church was governed by a college of priests. Saint Cyprian, a friend of Cornelius, writes that Cornelius was elected pope “by the judgment of God and of Christ, by the testimony of most of the clergy, by the vote of the people, with the consent of aged priests and of good men.”

He was pope during and following a period of persecution of the church and a schism occurred over how repentant church members who had practiced pagan sacrifices to protect themselves could be readmitted to the church. Cornelius agreed with Cyprian of Carthage that those who had lapsed could be restored to communion after varying forms of penance. That position was in contrast to the Novationists, who held that those who failed to maintain their confession of faith under persecution would not be received again into communion with the church. That resulted in a schism in the Church of Rome that spread as each side sought to gather support. Cornelius held a synod that confirmed his election and excommunicated Novatian, but the controversy regarding lapsed members continued for many years.

A document from Cornelius shows the extent of organization in the Church of Rome in the mid-third century: 46 priests, seven deacons, seven subdeacons. It is estimated that the number of Christians totaled about 50,000. The persecutions resumed in 251 under Emperor Trebonianus Gallus. Cornelius was sent into exile and may have died from the rigors of his banishment, but later accounts say that he was beheaded in June 253.

Fr. Gus Tharappel,msfs