

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

## **Tuesday, Sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

**The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.**

(Exodus 14:14)

### **James 1:12-18**

James encouraged his readers to stand strong and prove their worth by enduring trials and temptations. He says that we are not free to blame God for our temptations. We must be responsible. "God, who is untouched by evil, tempts no one." "It is the tug and lure of his own passion that tempts man." All things that come from God are good and only good comes from God.

### **Psalms 94**

**Happy the man whom you instruct, O Lord,  
whom by your law you teach,  
giving him rest from evil days.  
For the Lord will not cast off his people,  
nor abandon his inheritance.**

### **Mark 8:14-21**

The disciples came to the end of their bread supply – just one loaf left and were anxious. Jesus asked them, "Have you forgotten your experience with me and the loaves?"

**Remember and learn from experience. Remember how you have come through difficult situations in the past! God has been there...you have come through. Be amazed and confident that God, who has brought you thus far, will bring you through all that is happening and may happen.**

Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod, said Jesus. The disciples felt that the master also must be worried about their bread supply. Jesus said to them: "Don't you understand? Are your minds completely closed?" The Pharisees had just asked for a sign – some extraordinary event – as a proof of Jesus being the Messiah. Herod had built up his happiness on power, influence, prestige, wealth, etc. For the Pharisees and Herod the Kingdom of God was an earthly reality based on earthly power, established by force of might and wealth. This is the "leaven" that the disciples were to be "beware of".

**Beware of the ways of the world – the ways of power, influence, prestige, might, and**

**wealth. Welcome the ways of God's kingdom – the ways of obedience, love, service, self-surrender and sacrifice.**

## **Saint of the Day, February 18**

**St. Simon or Symeon of Jerusalem and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

According to tradition, the first bishop of Jerusalem was James, son of Zebedee, appointed bishop by the Apostles Peter. Symeon of Jerusalem was selected as James' successor after the conquest of Jerusalem. According to tradition, after the martyrdom of James and the conquest of Jerusalem which immediately followed, those apostles and disciples who were still living came together from all directions to discern who was worthy to succeed James. They, unanimously proclaimed Symeon, the son of Clopas, as the worthy person to succeed James. He was a cousin of Jesus, Clopas being a brother of Joseph. He is also one of those mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as having received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

In the year 66, civil war broke out in Palestine, as a consequence of Jewish opposition to the Romans. The Christians in Jerusalem were warned of the impending destruction of the city and ordered to leave it. Accordingly, that same year, they retired with St. Symeon at their head to the other side of the Jordan, occupying a small city called Pella. After the capture and burning of Jerusalem, the Christians returned and settled among the ruins until the Emperor Hadrian afterwards entirely razed it.

However, the church here flourished greatly, and many Jews were converted by the miracles wrought by the saints. When Vespasian and Domitian had ordered the destruction of all who were of the race of David, St. Symeon had escaped their search; but when Trajan gave a similar injunction, he was denounced as being not only one of David's descendants, but also a Christian, and he was brought before Atticus, the Roman governor. He was condemned to death and, after being tortured, was crucified around the year 107 C.E. According to tradition, he was extremely old, around 120.

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