

Pondering the Word...

THE ANAWIM WAY

Daily Liturgical Meditations

*Fourteenth to Twentieth Week
in Ordinary Time*

*July 7 to August 24, 2024
Cycle B - Year 2*

Scripture Texts: Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970
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What is the Anawim Spirituality?

Our spirituality has three essential characteristics:

Liturgical

The Liturgy is the source of our formation. Daily, we draw inspiration from the readings and prayers of the Liturgy, which we understand to be the ponderings of Mary's heart. For this reason, we honor Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Liturgical Life.

Eucharistic

Jesus in the Eucharist is the center of our spirituality. By faithful participation in Holy Mass and frequent Eucharistic Adoration, we are empowered by the Presence of Jesus to go forth to serve the people of God in all the circumstances of life.

Marian

We entrust ourselves to Mary, the mother and model of every Christian. She continually forms us in her spirit of humility, compassion and reconciling love, transforming us into the likeness of Jesus. She shares with us her spiritual motherhood as we are called to bring forth the life of Jesus in others.

If you would like to explore the Anawim Community further, we invite you to contact us.

Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time

***“My grace is sufficient for you,
for power is made perfect in weakness”***

2 Corinthians 12:9

Theme for the Week

In Baptism, we have received the mission of bearing the word of the Lord to others. Putting our faith and trust in the Lord, we let his power work in our weakness. Let us open our hearts to his grace as he builds his Kingdom in us and through us.

**WE CAN RECOGNIZE THE LORD
ONLY WHEN WE OPEN OUR HEARTS TO AMAZEMENT**
A Spiritual Reflection by Pope Francis

This Sunday's Gospel (*Mk* 6:1-6) tells us about the disbelief of Jesus' fellow villagers. After preaching in other villages in Galilee, Jesus returned to Nazareth where he had grown up with Mary and Joseph; and, one sabbath, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who were listening asked themselves: "Where does he get all this wisdom? But, isn't he the son of the carpenter and Mary, that is, of our neighbors that we know so well?" (cf. vv. 1-3). Confronted with this reaction, Jesus confirms the truth that had even become a part of popular wisdom: "A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house" (v. 4). We say this many times...

Let us reflect on the attitude of Jesus' fellow villagers. We could say they *knew Jesus, but they did not recognize him*. There is a difference between knowing and recognizing. In essence, this difference makes us understand that we can know various things about a person, form an idea, rely on what others say about that person, we might perhaps meet that person every now and then in the neighborhood; but all that is not enough. This is a *knowledge*, I would say ordinary, superficial, that does not *recognize* the uniqueness of the person. We all run this risk: we think we know so much about a person; even worse, we use labels and close the person within our own prejudices. Jesus' fellow villagers knew him for thirty years in the same way and they thought they knew everything! "But isn't this the boy we saw growing up, the son of the carpenter and Mary? Where do these things come from?" The distrust...in reality, they never realized who Jesus truly was. They remained at the exterior level and refused what was new about Jesus.

And here, we enter into the true crux of the problem: when we allow *the convenience of habit* and the *dictatorship of prejudice* to have the upper hand, it is difficult to open ourselves to what is new and allow ourselves to be amazed. We control: through attitudes, through prejudices ... It often happens in life that we seek from our experiences and even from people only what conforms to our own ideas and ways of thinking so as never to have to make an effort to change. And this can

even happen with God, and even to us believers, to us who think we know Jesus, that we already know so much about Him and that it is enough to repeat the same things as always. And this is not enough with God. But without openness to what is new and, above all – listen well – openness to God’s surprises, without amazement, faith becomes a tiring litany that slowly dies out and becomes a habit, a social habit.

I said a word: amazement. What is amazement? Amazement happens when we meet God: “I met the Lord!” But we read in the Gospel: many times the people who encountered Jesus and recognized him felt *amazed*. And we, by encountering God, must follow this path: to feel amazement. It is like the guarantee certificate that the encounter is true and not habitual.

In the end, why didn’t Jesus’ fellow villagers recognize and believe in him? But why? What is the reason? In a few words, we can say that *they did not accept the scandal of the Incarnation*. They did not know this mystery of the Incarnation, but they did not accept the mystery: they did not know it. They did not know the reason and they thought it was scandalous that the immensity of God should be revealed in the smallness of our flesh, that the Son of God should be the son of a carpenter, that the divine should be hidden in the human, that God should inhabit a face, the words, the gestures of a simple man. This is the scandal: the incarnation of God, his concreteness, his ‘daily life.’ And God became concrete in a man, Jesus of Nazareth; he became a companion on the way; he made himself *one of us*. “You are one of us,” we can say to Jesus. What a beautiful prayer! It is because one of us understands us, accompanies us, forgives us, loves us so much. In reality, an abstract, distant god is more comfortable, one that doesn’t get himself involved in situations and who accepts a faith that is far from life, from problems, from society. Or we would even like to believe in a ‘special effects’ god who does only exceptional things and always provokes strong emotions. Instead, brothers and sisters, God incarnated himself: God is humble, God is tender, God is hidden, he draws near to us, living the normality of our daily life.

And then, the same thing happens to us like Jesus’ fellow villagers, we risk that when he passes by, we will not recognize him. I repeat that beautiful phrase from Saint Augustine: “I am afraid of God, of the Lord, when he passes by.” But, Augustine, why are you afraid? “I am afraid

of not recognizing him. I am afraid that when the Lord passes by: *Timeo Dominum transeuntem*. We do not recognize him, we are scandalized by Him, we think with our hearts about this reality.

Now, in prayer, let us ask the Madonna, who welcomed the mystery of God in her daily life in Nazareth, for eyes and hearts free of prejudices and to have eyes open to be amazed: “Lord that we might meet you!”, and when we encounter the Lord there is this amazement. We meet him in the normal: eyes open to God’s surprises, at His humble and hidden presence in daily life.

Pope Francis, Angelus Message, July 4, 2021
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July 7, 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time



First Reading: Ezekiel 2:2-5

As the LORD spoke to me, the spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard the one who was speaking say to me: Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have revolted against me to this very day. Hard of face and obstinate of heart are they to whom I am sending you. But you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD! And whether they heed or resist—for they are a rebellious house—they shall know that a prophet has been among them.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 123:1-2, 2, 3-4

Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

To you I lift up my eyes
who are enthroned in heaven—
as the eyes of servants
are on the hands of their masters.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

As the eyes of a maid
are on the hands of her mistress,
so are our eyes on the LORD, our God,
till he have pity on us.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

Have pity on us, O LORD, have pity on us,
for we are more than sated with contempt;
our souls are more than sated
with the mockery of the arrogant,
with the contempt of the proud.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.



Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Brothers and sisters: That I, Paul, might not become too elated, because of the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Gospel Acclamation: see Luke 4:18

Alleluia, alleluia. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me for he sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor. ***Alleluia, alleluia.***



Gospel: Mark 6:1-6

Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.



Meditation:

The three readings today speak of God sending three faithful messengers – Ezekiel, Paul, and the Lord Jesus – to his people. We learn that being sent does not necessarily mean being accepted. Though we are weak and we find resistance intimidating, the Lord is faithful, so with his power at work in us, we too can be faithful to the will of the One who sends us.

In the first reading, Ezekiel hears the Lord telling him to go to the Israelites, who are “hard of face and obstinate of heart.” The Lord does not demand specific results from this mission, and he does not assure him of success. The prophet’s job is simply to go and speak in the Lord’s name: “Thus says the LORD God!” Ezekiel humbly obeys; he is sent, and he goes. No matter what the response of the Israelites, “whether they heed or resist,” they will know that a prophet has been among them. There is no chance for them to excuse future defiance with the claim that *we didn’t know*. We learn from Ezekiel the importance of obedience to God, without concern for acceptance or success.

Jesus is far greater than any prophet. He is the Son of God, sent to reveal the Father and call everyone into his Kingdom. But even Jesus must face the problem of stubborn resistance. In today’s Gospel

account, he returns to his hometown of Nazareth. The townspeople are astonished. They recognize that he speaks with great wisdom, far beyond his level of education; and they note that “mighty deeds are wrought by his hands” – miracles that were clearly not merely human in origin. Even so, the people of Nazareth take offense that this hometown boy is the one doing the mighty deeds. He is not acting according to their expectations. *After all, he is just a carpenter, and we know his relatives.* Again, just as with Ezekiel, the Lord has sent someone to his people, and they can never claim that there was not a prophet among them. They will be responsible for their response. No blaming; no excuses.

It seems that Jesus’ neighbors are as “hard of face and obstinate of heart” as their ancestors were. They can see with their own eyes that he is more than they expected, but they reject what they see. Even when he cures sick people by laying his hands on them, they are still not convinced. This reveals their real problem: they are refusing to accept reality. To be set in one’s belief system, despite all evidence to the contrary, is to be delusional. When we twist the truth to make it fit our own preconceived ideas, we only cut ourselves off from God and his saving power. Jesus is the ultimate reality. The realness of everything else is measured in relation to him. Before him, our delusions, our personal twisting of the truth, must be surrendered. We can be astonished or bewildered by the Lord, who often does what we do not expect, but we are never right to harden our hearts against him.

In contrast to the resistance of the Nazarenes, the Responsorial Psalm describes the response of humble people of faith, those who keep their eyes fixed on the Lord, no matter how others might react. The psalmist teaches us to focus on the Lord, just as “the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters.” Communication from a master to an attentive servant is simple; a mere hand gesture is enough. The servant does his assigned tasks without worrying about what the master’s business is with everything else on the estate. Even when we must face resistance from others, “the mockery of the arrogant” and “the contempt of the proud,” and even when our own nature rises up in fear or resistance, we are to keep our eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus, “pleading for his mercy.”

This is the approach of St. Paul, whose humility and simplicity shine forth in his Second Letter to the Corinthians. Paul is suffering from an unspecified affliction he calls “a thorn in the flesh.” He has begged the Lord for relief, but the Lord tells him: “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” This is an unexpected answer! Paul, a humble servant, accepts it and puts his trust in the Lord. He does not reject reality or cling to any delusions about himself. He relies on the Lord, keeping his eyes fixed on his Master’s hands. This gives Paul the freedom to be “content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and constraints.” These painful, difficult issues – his own weaknesses and the suffering that comes from the resistance of others – no longer trouble him. “When I am weak, then I am strong.” This is a precious lesson for every servant of the Lord. His grace is sufficient for us. In ourselves we are weak; in the Lord we are strong!

In what ways do I act stubbornly like the Nazarenes and the Israelites of old? What do I learn from Ezekiel and Paul about remaining faithful to the Lord in my everyday life? When have I been truly content with my weaknesses?

Mary, lead me in the way of truth.

Notes



First Reading: Hosea 2:16, 17c-18, 21-22

Thus says the LORD:

I will allure her;

I will lead her into the desert
and speak to her heart.

She shall respond there as in the days of her youth,
when she came up from the land of Egypt.

On that day, says the LORD,

She shall call me “My husband,”
and never again “My baal.”

I will espouse you to me forever:

I will espouse you in right and in justice,
in love and in mercy;

I will espouse you in fidelity,
and you shall know the LORD.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

The Lord is gracious and merciful.

Every day will I bless you,
and I will praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the LORD and highly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful.

Generation after generation praises your works
and proclaims your might.

They speak of the splendor of your glorious majesty
and tell of your wondrous works.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful.

They discourse of the power of your terrible deeds
and declare your greatness.

They publish the fame of your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your justice.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful.

The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

The LORD is good to all
and compassionate toward all his works.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful.

Gospel Acclamation: 2 Timothy 1:10

Alleluia, alleluia Our Savior Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life to light through the Gospel. ***Alleluia, alleluia.***



Gospel: Matthew 9:18-26

While Jesus was speaking, an official came forward, knelt down before him, and said, “My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand on her, and she will live.” Jesus rose and followed him, and so did his disciples. A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. She said to herself, “If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured.” Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, “Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you.” And from that hour the woman was cured.

When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion, he said, “Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they ridiculed him. When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl arose. And news of this spread throughout all that land.



Meditation:

Unlike the people of Nazareth in yesterday's Gospel, the people in today's Gospel have *faith*. The faith conviction of the father whose daughter has died is that if Jesus touches her, she will live. The faith conviction of the hemorrhaging woman is that if she touches him, she will be healed. Their faith teaches and inspires us: if we welcome the touch of the Lord with faith, we will live! If we touch him with faith, we will be healed! This is good news that brings us joy!

On a natural level, sickness and death are occasions for sadness and mourning. These are the emotions on display at the house of the dead child, where “the flute players and the crowd were making a commotion.” Grieving, especially in the case of someone who dies so young, often involves “commotion,” wailing and lamenting. In Jewish culture, there were even hired mourners, women who would come to wail and chant sorrowful songs. Jesus sees the situation quite differently; for him, sickness and death are occasions for revealing the power and mercy of God. God is never against us. He always wants eternal happiness for us. So the moments that we find painful and sorrowful are meant to be passing experiences, leading to greater life and joy.

We can find this view of hardship in the first reading. Through the prophet Hosea, the Lord speaks of “alluring” his people, just as a lover tries to woo his beloved. He says, “I will allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart.” The desert is a harsh place, not very romantic! Why would a lover lead his beloved into a desert? The beloved in this case is the people of Israel; they have fallen into idolatry, the worship of false gods. The Lord who is all-powerful could force Israel into obedience, but he prefers to win her heart, so that she will respond and return to him of her own free will. The Lord allows her to experience suffering, not merely as a punishment but more as a way of drawing her back to communion with himself. The “desert,” then, is a place where we meet the Lord anew, to be espoused to him “in right and in justice, in love and in mercy.”

The “desert” experience of the young girl and her father, and of the hemorrhaging woman, is meant to deepen their communion with the Lord. This is what Jesus sees. He therefore gives an order to the mourners that surely shocked them all: “Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping.” No wonder the crowd “ridiculed him”! Their ridicule turns to wonder when he raises her from the dead. The good news spreads rapidly throughout the area. It is another example of the Lord overcoming the sad effects of sin and turning grief into joy.

We are invited into the joy of the Lord. Even though we still experience being in a desert of trials and of mourning, we live in the sure hope of a joy that surpasses all our sorrow. Today’s Responsorial Psalm is a joyful proclamation of praise and rejoicing. Almost every line includes an expression of praise for some aspect of the Lord’s goodness. As we ponder this Psalm, we make our own its joyful praise of the God whose “greatness is unsearchable.” All the terms of praise are applied to the Lord, never once to those who are praising him. We are filled with joy when we praise the Lord, not when we praise ourselves.

We know from experience that what we say affects us. When we say negative things about others, we feel negative. When we praise the Lord, we begin to experience joy in the Lord. There is a natural basis for this. Even secular psychology knows that “counting our blessings” brings a positive mood change. Popular motivational speakers recommend a daily “gratitude list,” knowing that the intentional action of listing good things about one’s life will bring about a more positive

attitude, and a change of focus. But praising God is not a mere psychological technique. It is the fitting response to the real situation of our lives every day. There are also proper times for mourning, and there are Psalms that give profound expression to these human emotions as well. But today's Liturgy is teaching us how to praise the Lord. As we touch him, and are touched by him, as we are healed and given new life, we grow in love and gratitude. Our hearts, filled with his love, overflow to speak of the splendor of his glorious majesty and tell of his wondrous deeds.

How does the faith of the official and of the woman with the hemorrhage inspire me? What is my response to pain and sorrow? When have I experienced suffering as a means that led to greater life and joy?

Mary, teach me to praise the Lord as you do.

Notes

July 9, Tuesday, 14th Week in Ordinary Time
Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and Companions, Martyrs



First Reading: Hosea 8:4-7, 11-13

Thus says the LORD:

They made kings in Israel, but not by my authority;
they established princes, but without my approval.

With their silver and gold they made
idols for themselves, to their own destruction.

Cast away your calf, O Samaria!
my wrath is kindled against them;

How long will they be unable to attain
innocence in Israel?

The work of an artisan,
no god at all,

Destined for the flames —
such is the calf of Samaria!

When they sow the wind,
they shall reap the whirlwind;

The stalk of grain that forms no ear
can yield no flour;

Even if it could,
strangers would swallow it.

When Ephraim made many altars to expiate sin,
his altars became occasions of sin.

Though I write for him my many ordinances,
they are considered as a stranger's.

Though they offer sacrifice,
immolate flesh and eat it,
the LORD is not pleased with them.

He shall still remember their guilt
and punish their sins;
they shall return to Egypt.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 115:3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8, 9-10
The house of Israel trusts in the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*

Our God is in heaven;
whatever he wills, he does.

Their idols are silver and gold,
the handiwork of men.

R. The house of Israel trusts in the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*

They have mouths but speak not;
they have eyes but see not;
They have ears but hear not;
they have noses but smell not.

R. The house of Israel trusts in the Lord.

or *Alleluia*.

They have hands but feel not;
they have feet but walk not.
Their makers shall be like them,
everyone that busts in them.

R. The house of Israel trusts in the Lord.

or *Alleluia*,

Gospel Acclamation: John 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia. I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me. *Alleluia, alleluia*



Gospel: Matthew 9:32-38

A demoniac who could not speak was brought to Jesus, and when the demon was driven out the mute man spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” But the Pharisees said, “He drives out demons by the prince of demons.”

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”



Meditation:

Our hearts are made for God. He created us with an *interior space* that only he can fill. We have an innate longing to worship God and follow him. If we stray from the path of truth and goodness that leads to him, our longing for God will still seek fulfillment, but in futile ways. We will turn to false gods, idols.

In the case of the Israelites during Hosea’s time, they turned to the human authority of the kings they chose, and they made silver and gold idols, like the “calf of Samaria.” Hosea’s task is to point out the disastrous consequences that will result from these evil choices. The Lord tells him,

“When they sow the wind, / they shall reap the whirlwind.” In other words, looking to idols for help only makes things worse, just as drinking sea water to quench one’s thirst only makes one thirstier.

Jesus is the perfect revelation of God to us. His works, like the exorcism and the healings he performs in today’s Gospel, are meant to show us that he is indeed the One we are seeking. Not only are we seeking him, but to a much greater degree *he is seeking us*. When he looks upon the burdened and helpless human family, his heart is “moved with pity.” Seeing that we are “like sheep without a shepherd,” he comes as the Good Shepherd.

The crowds are amazed at Jesus, but the Pharisees are not. Their reaction, full of jealousy and pride, is that his power over demons comes from Satan rather than from God. We learn from this that even when the Shepherd comes to guide his sheep, the sheep are free to reject him. Even when God reveals his love and mercy and power, we can still turn to idols. The Pharisees appear to be serving God, but in fact they are serving the idol of their own religious authority. If they continue in their fruitless resistance, they will “reap the whirlwind.”

We need to examine our own lives to see how we may be secretly rejecting the Lord to rely on some false god or another. Certainly we do not explicitly believe in any other god, nor do we bow down before idols of silver or gold. Our faith is in Jesus, who has come and has redeemed us from such errors. But the brokenness in our nature remains, and we are prone to wander, like sheep who do not closely follow the shepherd. Our confused hearts glance in many directions when we are not focused on God.

We can discern what we truly worship by observing what we are willing to *sacrifice*, and for what. For some, the idol of *youth* is what we sacrifice for. In order to appear young, and be worthy of a sort of worship by others, we may make many sacrifices – not eating certain foods, getting up early to exercise, spending money on hair dyes and skin treatments and the right clothes. We are willing to work and suffer to appear younger than we are, so that we will seem more valuable, more deserving of honor and love.

Another common idol is *money*. In this case, we sacrifice our time and energy to work many hours, or even get money by illegal means, so that we will feel secure in having wealth. In order to achieve wealth, we set aside our prayer time and our service of others, since these things seem like a waste of time that will bring us no profit.

At the root of all false worship is an exaggerated dedication to *self*. What is the sacrifice? We sacrifice our relationship with God and with others, and we sacrifice our own true well-being, simply to be in control. *I want what I want, when I want it!* When we have this attitude, we make decisions that we rationalize as morally neutral. Although we acknowledge it is not the *best* thing to do, it satisfies some desire at the moment, and we excuse ourselves by saying, *It's not hurting anyone!* If we base our actions on the moral standard of "it's not hurting anyone," we are no different from the Israelites chastised by Hosea. Our standard is no longer love. We have set aside true worship and the true God and turned to an empty substitute.

We overcome idolatry by returning to true worship, expressed by the gift of ourselves – and the sacrifice of our self-will – to God. Our model is Jesus Christ. When we join him in offering ourselves to the Father – by our loving service, by our participation in the Holy Mass, by our faithfulness to his will – we find what we are longing for, union with the one true God.

When have I wandered away from the Lord like a lost sheep? Why do I so easily turn to idols? What is so appealing about these false gods? What consequences have I experienced when I made evil choices?

***Mary, help me to cast away the idols in my life.
St. Augustine Zhao Rong and Companions, pray for us.***

The 120 martyrs honored today died in China between 1649 and 1930. Most of them (eighty-seven) were born in China – parents, children, catechists, and four Chinese priests. Among their number was an eighteen-year-old, Chi Zhuzi, who cried out to those who had just cut off his right arm and were preparing to flay him alive: "Every piece of my flesh, every drop of my blood, will tell you that I am a Christian." The thirty-three foreign-born martyrs were mostly priests and women religious. **Augustine Zhao Rong** was a respected, high-ranking Chinese soldier. In 1774, while serving as a guard of the prison, he witnessed the repression of the Christians and was moved by their example of faith, courage, and charity. He eventually left the military, was baptized, and became a priest. As a priest he led many youths to faith in Christ. While taking the Sacraments to the sick, he was arrested. Even though he was elderly, he bravely endured being beaten with a bamboo stick seventy times and died a few days later, on January 27, 1815. The 120 martyrs of China, beatified in groups at various times, were canonized together by Saint John Paul II in 2000.



First Reading: Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12

Israel is a luxuriant vine
whose fruit matches its growth.
The more abundant his fruit,
the more altars he built;
The more productive his land,
the more sacred pillars he set up.
Their heart is false,
now they pay for their guilt;
God shall break down their altars
and destroy their sacred pillars.
If they would say,
“We have no king” —
Since they do not fear the LORD,
what can the king do for them?
The king of Samaria shall disappear,
like foam upon the waters.
The high places of Aven shall be destroyed,
the sin of Israel;
thorns and thistles shall overgrow their altars.
Then they shall cry out to the mountains, “Cover us!”
and to the hills, “Fall upon us!”
“Sow for yourselves justice,
reap the fruit of piety;
break up for yourselves a new field,
for it is time to seek the LORD,
till he come and rain down justice upon you.”



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

Seek always the face of the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*

Sing to him, sing his praise,
proclaim all his wondrous deeds.
Glory in his holy name;
rejoice, O hearts that seek the LORD!

R. Seek always the face of the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*

Look to the LORD in his strength;
seek to serve him constantly.
Recall the wondrous deeds that he has wrought,
his portents, and the judgments he has uttered.

R. Seek always the face of the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*

You descendants of Abraham, his servants,
sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!
He, the LORD, is our God;
throughout the earth his judgments prevail.

R. Seek always the face of the Lord.

or *Alleluia.*



Gospel: Matthew 10:1-7

Jesus summoned his Twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness. The names of the Twelve Apostles are these: first, Simon called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus; Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus.

Jesus sent out these Twelve after instructing them thus, “Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”



Meditation:

In 2002, Pope St. John Paul II added a new set of mysteries to ponder during the prayer of the Rosary. In addition to the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries that Catholics have pondered for generations, he proposed the Luminous mysteries, with decades dedicated to events from the public ministry of Jesus: his baptism, the miracle at Cana, his proclamation of the Kingdom, the Transfiguration, and the institution of the Eucharist. Of these five, only the third mystery does not specify a unique event. “The Proclamation of the Kingdom” may refer to many events. Some Catholics, in meditating on this mystery, look to Matthew 5, the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount. Others ponder Scripture passages on Jesus’ ministry in Galilee, where he healed the sick and cast out demons as he urged people to

repent and believe the Good News. Today's Gospel provides us with another option for fruitful meditation on the Proclamation of the Kingdom. Here Jesus summons the Twelve and sends them out, telling them, "As you go, make this proclamation: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"

The proclamation of the Kingdom is to be done by personally chosen missionaries, sent to a specific audience, to do a particular work. Jesus had many disciples, including these twelve men, but after their commissioning, these men were also known as Apostles. The English word "*apostle*" is derived from a Greek word meaning "to send forth." The Twelve are *sent forth*, not yet to the Gentiles, but "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." They are to drive out unclean spirits and "to cure every disease and every illness" by the authority Jesus conferred on them.

As baptized missionary disciples, we have our own personal share in this work, to serve in our own way the "lost sheep" to whom Jesus sends us. Proclaiming the Kingdom is not an easy task, partly because of our own weaknesses and partly because of the broken condition of those to whom we are sent.

Today's first reading gives us insight into why the Kingdom is sometimes slow to take root in people's hearts. In the days of the prophet Hosea, the people had turned to idolatry. One of the problems was that they attributed their material gains to the power of false gods. Thus, the more abundant their harvests, the more altars they built to the fertility gods of Canaan; the more productive their land, the more sacred pillars they set up in honor of Baal. In other words, the more God blessed his people, the more unfaithful they became! The Lord does the logical thing: he takes away some of their abundance, not as an arbitrary punishment, but in order to move his people to seek him once again.

The Lord uses trials to lead us back to him. In order for us to welcome his Kingdom, we must learn to put our trust in him. This involves forsaking, and sometimes being stripped of, our worldly securities. Still, there is more to the message of the Kingdom than the part about what must be taken away. The more important part is what God is offering. His words of encouragement through Hosea give us hope that we can make a new beginning, no matter what our past sins

may be. “Sow for yourselves justice, / reap the fruit of piety; / break up for yourselves a new field, / for it is time to seek the LORD, / till he come and rain down justice upon you.” In other words, now is the time to stop seeking satisfaction in the “old field” of worldly values; it is time to rely on the Lord, to seek his Kingdom above all else. This is the message entrusted to us, the message we are *sent forth* to bring to the world.

How do the trials that God sends me lead me back to him? Why is it necessary for me to be stripped of my worldly securities? Who and where are the “lost sheep” to whom God is sending me?

Mary, give me wisdom as I proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Notes

July 11, Thursday, 14th Week in Ordinary Time
Saint Benedict, Abbot



First Reading: Hosea 11:1-4, 8e-9

Thus says the LORD:

When Israel was a child I loved him,
out of Egypt I called my son.

The more I called them,
the farther they went from me,

Sacrificing to the Baals
and burning incense to idols.

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
who took them in my aims;

I drew them with human cords,
with bands of love;

I fostered them like one
who raises an infant to his cheeks;

Yet, though I stooped to feed my child,
they did not know that I was their healer.

My heart is overwhelmed,
my pity is stirred.

I will not give vent to my blazing anger,
I will not destroy Ephraim again;

For I am God and not man,
the Holy One present among you;

I will not let the flames consume you.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16

Let us see your face, Lord, and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hearken.

From your throne upon the cherubim, shine forth.

Rouse your power.

R. Let us see your face, Lord, and we shall be saved.

Once again, O LORD of hosts,

look down from heaven, and see:

Take care of this vine,

and protect what your right hand has planted,

the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

R. Let us see your face, Lord, and we shall be saved.

Gospel Acclamation: Mark 1:15

Alleluia, alleluia. The Kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe in the Gospel. ***Alleluia, alleluia.***



Gospel: Matthew 10:7-15

Jesus said to his Apostles: “As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give. Do not take gold or silver or copper for your belts; no sack for the journey, or a second tunic, or sandals, or walking stick. The laborer deserves his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, wish it peace. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words — go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.”



Meditation:

In yesterday’s Gospel, Jesus commissioned the Twelve, whom he sent out as his Apostles to proclaim that “the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” As the narrative continues in today’s Gospel, the Lord sends them out to “cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons.” He also emphasizes that, as they go, they are to remain entirely dependent upon him and upon those who welcome them. They are not allowed to have a backup plan or rely on their own resources. He says, “Do not take gold or silver or copper for your belts; no sack for the journey, or a second tunic, or sandals, or walking stick.”

We marvel at this advice given to men who are entrusted with such important work. When we remember that we also share in this mission of the Apostles, our marvel may turn to discomfort. As we go out to serve the Lord in our daily lives, our nature fears following his instruction too thoroughly. Although we know that we are entirely dependent upon him, we take comfort in having some material support readily available. To be *too poor* seems reckless, too dependent, too helpless. This fear is evidence of our weak faith. Faith tells us that we are not helpless at all because we have the power of God. There is nothing reckless about trusting in him. This is the way of faith. As we

take steps beyond what our nature can tolerate, our faith grows. Faith requires that we take what feels like big risks, so that we can grow in confidence that the Lord truly does meet our needs and care for us.

The tender care of the Lord is described in today's first reading by way of a beautiful image: the love of a father for his infant son. With strong yet gentle arms, he raises us to his cheeks. He draws us to himself with "bands of love." He knows our fears, our weakness, our ingratitude. He knows that our sins deserve punishment; yet he says, "My heart is overwhelmed, / my pity is stirred. / I will not give vent to my blazing anger... / For I am God and not man, / the Holy One present among you; / I will not let the flames consume you." It is this divine love that we rely on as we go forth. It is this love that urges us to go forth, for the sake of our brothers and sisters who do not yet know the tender compassion of God.

Given the spirit of love that is the foundation of our mission, it may puzzle us to ponder Jesus' instructions to the Apostles about how to relate to those who will not receive them or listen to their proclamation of the Kingdom: "Go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet." It does not sound tender and compassionate – especially when he goes on to speak of the terrible fate of such a town on the day of judgment!

The concept of "shaking the dust" may be unfamiliar to us, but the Jews of that time were familiar with it as a way of rejecting any defilement from the Gentiles. For us today, it teaches a two-fold lesson. First, people are responsible for their own choices. There are times when we must make it clear that we disagree and that we will not compromise the treasure of the Gospel. If someone rejects us for it, the burden falls on them. Second, we must not let any trace of judgment or resentment cling to us when we feel rejected – no brooding over failure or getting back at those who oppose us. When it is time for us to move on, we are to do so with clean feet and a clean conscience, making a fresh and joyful start. We cannot allow the past offenses of others to interfere with the mission Jesus has given to us!

When was my faith so weak that I acted as if God could not meet my needs and care for me? When have I allowed the offenses of others to interfere with my mission? What is my inner response when others refuse to accept God's love for them?

***Mary, lead me to live in total dependence upon the Lord.
St. Benedict, pray for us.***

Benedict was born of a distinguished family in Nursia (modern Norcia) in Umbria, Italy, around 480. Dissatisfied with his studies and with the worldly atmosphere in which he was living, and afraid for his soul, he gave up his inheritance and lived in a small village, and later in Subiaco as a hermit in a cave. After he had spent years in prayer, word of his holiness brought nearby monks to ask for his leadership. Isolation was not the call of Benedict, so he and some other men organized twelve monasteries with twelve monks and an abbot in each. He founded the monastery at Monte Casinò which became the root of the Church's monastic system. Later, instead of founding small separate communities, he gathered his disciples into one large community in which all members shared life in common. Daily the monks prayed, worked, and studied the Bible, as Benedict realized the strongest and truest foundation was the power of the Word of God itself: "For what page or word of the Bible is not a perfect rule for temporal life?" Benedict is considered the "Patriarch of Western Monasticism" and is the patron of Europe. He died in 547.

Notes



First Reading: Hosea 14:2-10

Thus says the LORD:

Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God;
you have collapsed through your guilt.

Take with you words,

and return to the LORD;

Say to him, “Forgive all iniquity,
and receive what is good, that we may render
as offerings the bullocks from our stalls.

Assyria will not save us,
nor shall we have horses to mount;

We shall say no more, ‘Our god,’
to the work of our hands;
for in you the orphan finds compassion.”

I will heal their defection, says the LORD,
I will love them freely;
for my wrath is turned away from them.

I will be like the dew for Israel:
he shall blossom like the lily;

He shall strike root like the Lebanon cedar,
and put forth his shoots.

His splendor shall be like the olive tree
and his fragrance like the Lebanon cedar.

Again they shall dwell in his shade
and raise grain;

They shall blossom like the vine,
and his fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

Ephraim! What more has he to do with idols?
I have humbled him, but I will prosper him.

“I am like a verdant cypress tree”—
because of me you bear fruit!

Let him who is wise understand these things;
let him who is prudent know them.

Straight are the paths of the LORD,
in them the just walk,
but sinners stumble in them.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14 and 17

My mouth will declare your praise.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me.

R. My mouth will declare your praise.

Behold, you are pleased with sincerity of heart,
and in my inmost being you teach me wisdom.
Cleanse me of sin with hyssop, that I may be purified;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

R. My mouth will declare your praise.

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R. My mouth will declare your praise.

Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.
O LORD, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

R. My mouth will declare your praise.

Gospel Acclamation: John 16:13a, 14:26d

Alleluia, alleluia. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you to all truth and remind you of all I told you. ***Alleluia, alleluia.***



Gospel: Matthew 10:16-23

Jesus said to his Apostles: “Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves. But beware of men, for they will hand you over to courts and scourge you in their synagogues, and you will be led before governors and kings for my sake as a witness before them and the pagans. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but whoever endures to the

end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. Amen, I say to you, you will not finish the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”



Meditation:

Today's Gospel continues Matthew's account of Jesus' instructions to his Apostles as he sends them out to proclaim the Kingdom. Yesterday, he told them not to take any extra provisions for this journey; they are to be radically dependent on him. Today, Jesus warns them about what they will endure on their mission, telling them, not that there *might* be hard times, but that men *will* “hand you over to courts and scourge you in their synagogues.” In such times of persecution the Apostles are to be “shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.” Also they are not to prepare even a verbal defense against their accusers but rely instead on the Holy Spirit.

We can see that this is *not* a manager giving a little pep talk to his sales force, building up their enthusiasm to go out with confidence and winning smiles. No, Jesus is giving the Apostles a realistic and horrifying description of what awaits them. “Brother will hand over brother to death.” How did this message sound in the ears of James and John, or Peter and Andrew, the two sets of brothers among the Apostles? We tend to trust our family members above others, and that is as it should be. Yet here Jesus is saying that the proclamation of the Kingdom will be so divisive that it will lead brothers to betray one another. There will also be division between parents and children. Did James and John consider what this might mean for their father Zebedee?

We are given these stern words, not to frighten us but to teach us. The cost of discipleship is indeed high, but the mission is too great to let anything prevent it. Jesus does not want us to pull back in fear but to go forward with a strength that is enough to withstand every trial. We do not have this strength in ourselves; we have it as a gift from him. He is again insisting on our reliance on him and on the power of the Holy Spirit. We ourselves are not very shrewd, but we have the gift of Wisdom. We are not simple as doves, but when we are led by the Spirit (symbolized by a “dove”), we have no need to worry. This is why we do not need to memorize what we will say: “You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

The Lord gives us the gift of “what to say” in today’s first reading as well. Through the prophet Hosea, he is urging the people of Israel to return to him. All the means they have tried to prop themselves up – their alliances, their military forces, their idols – have failed, and the people have been brought to their knees: “You have collapsed through your guilt.” They are in such a weak condition that they do not even know the way back to faithfulness – like lost sheep without a shepherd.

God goes the extra mile, not only urging them to try reconciliation but even providing them with the very words with which to approach him! Like a loving father teaching his children how to say, “I’m sorry,” the Lord says to them, “Take with you words, / and return to the LORD.” Then he teaches them how to ask for forgiveness and to make amends, instructing them to say, “Forgive all iniquity, / and receive what is good....”

What a loving God we have! When we *collapse through our guilt*, he not only calls us back and moves us to repentance, he also provides us with a tangible, sacramental means to reconcile with him. When we go to Confession, the Church even provides us with the *Act of Contrition*, in which we are given the very words we may use in acknowledging our sins and asking the Lord’s forgiveness.

We are also given “what to say” in today’s Psalm, the *Miserere*, the great Psalm of repentance. When we have sinned, we can use this Psalm to ask the Lord to have mercy on us, to “wipe out our offense,” and to “create a clean heart.” With a forgiven and renewed heart, we can continue our mission in a sometimes hostile world, as “sheep in the midst of wolves,” without fear, for we are under the care of a Shepherd who loves and protects us.

In times of confusion, why do I falter and not call on the Spirit of Wisdom? In what ways am I focused on my inadequacies rather than on the Lord? How do I prepare myself for misunderstandings and persecution?

Mary, help me to trust more in the care of the Shepherd who loves me.

July 13, Saturday, 14th Week in Ordinary Time
Saint Henry



First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, with the train of his garment filling the temple. Seraphim were stationed above; each of them had six wings: with two they veiled their faces, with two they veiled their feet, and with two they hovered aloft.

They cried one to the other, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts! All the earth is filled with his glory!” At the sound of that cry, the frame of the door shook and the house was filled with smoke.

Then I said, “Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” Then one of the seraphim flew to me, holding an ember that he had taken with tongs from the altar.

He touched my mouth with it and said, “See, now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, your sin purged.”

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?” “Here I am,” I said; “send me!”



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5

The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

The LORD is king, in splendor robed;
robed is the LORD and girt about with strength.

R. The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

And he has made the world firm,
not to be moved.

Your throne stands firm from of old;
from everlasting you are, O LORD.

R. The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed:
holiness befits your house,
O LORD, for length of days.

R. The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

Gospel Acclamation: 1 Peter 4:14

Alleluia, alleluia. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of God rests upon you. ***Alleluia, alleluia.***



Gospel: Matthew 10:24-33

Jesus said to his Apostles: “No disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, for the slave that he become like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more those of his household!

“Therefore do not be afraid of them. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.”



Meditation:

In the past several days we have read from Matthew 10, where Jesus sent out the Twelve to proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” He gave them specific instructions and warnings about their mission. Surely the Apostles were all aware of their unworthiness for such a mission, yet there is no record in this case of any of the Twelve protesting or arguing about what they were sent to do.

In today’s first reading, we get a reminder of how we often react when the Lord bids us to do something in his service. It is the account of the call of Isaiah. Isaiah sees a vision of the Lord sitting on a throne, surrounded by angels who worship him. At this awesome and majestic sight, Isaiah cries out, “Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” We can empathize with Isaiah’s response to seeing the Lord. We are attracted to what is glorious and holy, but when we get too close, we get frightened. And like Isaiah – if we are humble enough to dare to think about why we are frightened – we know we are unworthy. The Apostle Peter had a similar reaction when he saw Jesus work the miracle of the fish: “Leave me, Lord, I am a sinful man” (Lk 5:8). Isaiah is even more mortified: “I am doomed!”

However, the Lord has a solution to the problem of sin, once we admit that we are unworthy. In Isaiah's case, he prepares him for his mission by sending one of the seraphim to touch the prophet's mouth with an ember from the altar. The angel reassures him: "See, now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, your sin purged." Then Isaiah has a choice to make. Will he, knowing his own unworthiness, trust that this spiritual cleansing is sufficient to qualify him to go forth as a messenger of the Lord? We quickly learn Isaiah's decision. When the Lord asks, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?", Isaiah boldly volunteers: "Here I am; send me!" Here is the same man who moments earlier felt doomed at seeing the Lord, and now he is freely offering to serve him. The power of God's mercy and Isaiah's simple trust in him have made all the difference. Without hesitation he concludes that if the Lord has cleansed him, he should respond confidently to his call.

We are all called to go out and spread the Good News. In a sense our call is greater than Isaiah's because our message is greater. What is our response? Any honest self-appraisal will reveal that we are selfish, inconsistent, and fearful. We are really not qualified to proclaim the Kingdom – except that we are! Not on our own, but by the power of God at work. When we were baptized, we were cleansed and filled with his own Spirit: "Your wickedness is removed, your sin purged." When we were confirmed, we were given all the strength we need to do his work. As the Lord said to St. Paul in last Sunday's reading, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."

Sometimes, in embarking on a new course of action, or in trying to grow into a new attitude, we need to imitate the behavior we desire, to "act as if." Children mature by imitating their parents and trusted adults. In today's Gospel, Jesus refers to this natural process. "No disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master," but the disciple or the slave grows in wisdom and in service by becoming *like* his master. Our path is the same. By consciously imitating Jesus, we become more like him, more capable of serving as he calls us to serve. The spiritual classic by Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, has helped Christians pursue this goal for six hundred years. Its very title points out the path to holiness: imitate Christ; *act as if* you were Christ. More recently there was the WWJD fad, posing the question, "What Would Jesus Do?" as a basis for making decisions in one's life.

Today's readings assure us that as we go out to proclaim the Kingdom – unworthy and ignorant as we are – the Lord will cleanse us and provide all we need. He regards us as “worth more than many sparrows,” and has counted all the hairs of our head. He wants us to “become like the Master,” to grow in holiness as we give ourselves in service to others.

*How does the power of God's mercy enable me to do his will?
How do I respond when God calls me to go out and spread the
Good News? In my daily life, how am I being called to imitate
Jesus?*

***Mary, free me from all my fears as I strive daily to imitate Jesus.
St. Henry, pray for us.***

Henry II was born in Bavaria in 972 and received an excellent education under the care of St. Wolfgang, Bishop of Ratisbon. In 995 he succeeded his father as Duke of Bavaria, and in 1002 he became King of Germany and was crowned King of Italy in 1004. Firmly grounded in his Catholic faith, which the practice of meditation kept alive in his heart, he sought in all things the greater glory of God. In 1014 he was crowned Emperor of Rome. He respected the Church's freedom, fostering ecclesiastical and monastic reform, and persuaded the pope to authorize the Creed to be recited on Sundays and major feasts. His ultimate purpose was to establish a stable peace in Europe. He and his wife, St. Cunigunde of Luxembourg, lived in perpetual chastity, to which they bound themselves by a vow. He died in 1024. He is the only king of Germany to be canonized.

Notes