

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (*Psalm 1:1-3*)

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in company with scoffers. Rather, the law of the LORD is his joy; and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted near streams of water, that yields its fruit in season; its leaves never wither; whatever he does prospers. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – Prayerful meditation puts us consciously into God’s presence

Renewal of our heart and mind prevents spiritual lukewarmness and relapsing to our former way of life. The danger of lukewarmness appears when we allow our zeal for God and His Kingdom to flag due to distraction, discouragement, or negligence to keep a consistent prayer life which includes reflection and meditation. The constant call of this passing world is strong and may become irresistible when our love for God and His Kingdom becomes lukewarm. Thus, St Paul exhorts us to constantly renew our mind and spirit so as not to fall back into our former way of life when we were deceived by our worldly desires but instead, to be led by the Holy Spirit in righteousness and truth of our new life in grace. *That you should put away the old self of your former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God’s way in righteousness and holiness of truth (Ephesians 4:22-24).* There is much self-love and aggrandizement of the ego in our present world and false ideologies abound at this time. Without prayer and meditation, it is easy to be influenced by the ideology of the world and to love and crave for the same things that the rest of the world love and crave for.

Constant recall of God’s goodness helps us remain grateful, humble and repentant. *Bless the Lord, my soul; and do not forget all His gifts, Who pardons all your sins, and heals all your ills, Who redeems your life from the pit, and crowns you with mercy and compassion, Who fills your days with good things, so your youth is renewed like the eagle’s (Psalm 103:2-5).* Without frequent reflection on God’s love for us, His personal Sacrifice when He sent Jesus to redeem the world, His mercy and grace which He lavished on us, it is easy to take our hard-won salvation for granted, be blind to our sins and allow our faith and love for God to grow weak and cold. On the other hand, constant reflection of God’s love and mercy opens our heart and mind to the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit within us. It is only by the grace of the Holy Spirit that we can be transformed in heart, mind and soul. It is by our own actions that we can hinder or facilitate the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection on God’s Word puts us consciously into God’s presence, keeps alive our faith in Him, enables us to understand His will better and gives us peace. When Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple after losing Him for three days, Jesus said to them: *Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49).* Though they did not understand what He said to them, Mary kept all these things in her heart. She pondered upon them and was able to let go of Jesus when time came for Jesus to begin His public ministry. Though God can speak to us in a myriad of ways, He loves to speak to our heart through His Word. God’s Word possesses latent power which can be released at His will. Thus, a prayerful meditation of God’s Word is an effective way to put ourselves into His holy presence, to discern His will, and to feel His love and peace. *You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in You (Isaiah 26:3).*

Uniting ourselves to the Life and Passion of Christ and the life of our Blessed Mother through prayerful meditation. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens (Ephesians 1:3).* Through the Passion of Christ, God gives us every spiritual blessing that we need in order to live a life of grace even in this sinful world. Through prayer and meditation, especially when we meditate on the Life and Passion of Christ, we open our hearts to receive the graces, light and strength we need in order to overcome obstacles, adversities and temptation and to continue on the true path of the Lord. The Passion of Christ is an inexhaustible source of grace, light and strength for us to draw upon to help us walk securely to our true home with our Heavenly Father.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, You show Your love for me not only on the Cross but also by having Your mind fixed on me. *How precious to me are Your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand (Psalm 139:17-18).* Give me the grace to live in Your presence through prayerful meditation of Your Word. Keep my mind engaged in the meditation of Your precepts and train up my mind to be like Yours so that I can show Your love and compassion to others, and receive a fuller measure of Your blessings. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk