

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (*Psalms 111:10*)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; prudent are all who practise it. His praise endures forever. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – Reverence for God will lead us to a fuller understanding of His ways

Reverence for God is a natural response from our heart in our knowledge of God and of our place before God. For those souls who know God and have experienced His love, presence and His merciful Hand in their lives, reverence for God is something that comes naturally. Faith in God and in all that He stands for put us in touch with a reality that we cannot see with our physical eyes. The reality is the absolute truth that God is everything and we are nothing without His grace (cf. John 15:5). Such a possession of this everlasting truth liberates us and transforms every aspect of our being: physical, mental, emotion, spiritual. Once freed from the bondages of disbelief and lack of faith and with the eyes of our heart opened to see the truth, our entire being arises in response to this absolute truth in reverence, in adoration, in thanksgiving, in praise. In truth, we are made to adore, reverence, love, glorify God always and everywhere. Herein lies our true joy.

Reverence because God is our holy Creator. We reverence our parents and elders out of gratitude and righteousness. God is more than a parent. God did not merely create us out of a need to express His creativity, as in a human artist. But He thought about each of us even before the foundation of the world (cf. Ephesians 1:4) and formulated for each person a unique plan of hope (cf. Jeremiah 29:11). In His great generosity, He adopted each of us as His children through Jesus Christ. Unlike His other creatures, we are made in His own image. We have a free will, a heart to receive and give love, an intellect to think and reason. He gave us an everlasting soul and destined us to share His glory as co-heirs with Jesus Christ.

Reverence because it is righteous and God wants us to reverence Him. *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* (Matthew 10:28). Most people are afraid of other people but not of God. Here, Jesus reminds us not to be afraid of people who can harm only the body but not the soul. Rather, we must reserve real and holy fear for God who can destroy both body and soul. Holy fear of God will put us on the true path of obedience to His teachings and commandments. It will lead us to avoid offending Him. All these will help us in various ways to attain our salvation which is the most important to God and to us.

Reverence because God is love. We owe a great debt to God. Through love He created us. In His pleasure and generosity, God bestowed upon each of us the great dignity of being His children through adoption in Christ. When the human race fell from grace, God sent none other than His precious only begotten Son, Jesus Christ to redeem the world not by coming as a military conqueror but by saving the world through the shedding of His Blood on the Cross of Calvary. God gives us many proofs of His love. After sending His Son, God sent His Holy Spirit which is a guarantee of our glorious, eternal inheritance in heaven (cf. Ephesians 1:14). It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to call God "Our Father" (cf. Romans 8:15).

No greater transforming force on earth. Out of the darkness of our sins, God calls us into His uncreated light and to accept the truth of His mighty love and His promise of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ by His death on the Cross of Calvary. In this wonderful light, our little world is transformed. No longer does our world revolve around ourselves but around God. No longer are our desires and interests top of our agenda but the desires and will of God. Our lives are no longer about answering the call of the world to be successful, to carve a successful career, to earn more money but to answer God's call to holiness.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, You alone are holy and mighty in love. I rejoice that You created me out of love to share in Your glory as co-heirs to Your glorious Kingdom where there is eternal beatitude. Replace all the apathy, lukewarmness and indifference in my soul with holy fear, reverence and ardent love for You. Remove all my unholy fears of people and situations with holy fear of offending You. Through faith, in holy fear of You, Abraham was able to obey Your command to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Through faith, in reverence and love for You, our Blessed Mother Mary was able to submit herself wholly into Your hands into the role You destined for her. Through holy fear and reverence, increase my wisdom so that I may understand more deeply Your love for me, see the merciful action of Your hand in my life, and respond with greater joy and commitment to Your call to holiness. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.