

MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, Thirty First Week in Ordinary Time

**Strive to let forbearance become the quality of your presence
that you may not become a burden to others.**

Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

Paul invited the Philippians to be fellow imitators of Christ. He also encouraged them to be aware of those whose lives were scandalous and not follow them because “our citizenship is in heaven”. Paul was saying to them that they must never forget that they are citizens of heaven and that their conduct must match their citizenship.

Remember who you are! You are fellow citizens with the saints! Be faithful to your calling!

He instructed them to “stand fast in the Lord”. The meaning of “Stand Fast” as Paul uses is like the soldier “standing fast” in battle with the enemy surging down upon him.

Be strong! Stand fast in the Lord! Be rooted and growing in the Lord!

Psalm 122

**I rejoiced because they said to me,
“We will go up to the house of the Lord.”
And now we have set foot
within your gate, O Jerusalem.**

Luke 16:1-8

Jesus told them the parable of an enterprising manager who was about to be dismissed. The manager used his “practical (economic) wisdom” to deal with the crisis of being fired from his job. His employer praised him for being enterprising and Jesus held him out as an example to his disciples - not because he abused his employer’s wealth, but because he used his wisdom to gain friends for himself for a future time of need.

Then Jesus called his disciples to higher values. He called them to use material possessions to build relationships, friendships, fellowship, and communion with others.

He called them to be honest and trustworthy in all relationships, even in dealing with material things. He called them to be honest in using material things, which are God’s gifts. All possessions are God’s gifts for the good of the community.

You cannot serve both God and possessions. We are at the service of God and possessions are at our service.

Saint of the Day, November 8 - Bl. John Duns Scotus and 18 saints are remembered this day.

Little is known of the early life Duns Scotus. His date and place of birth are disputed. His date of birth is thought to have been between 23 December 1265 and 17 March 1266 and place of birth near the North Lodge of Duns Castle in Scotland. Duns Scotus received the religious habit of the Friars Minor at Dumfries, where his uncle, Elias Duns, was guardian. His age is based on the first certain date for his life, that of his ordination to the priesthood in England on March 17, 1291. The minimum canonical age for receiving holy orders is 25 and it is generally assumed that he would have been ordained as soon as it was permitted.

John received the habit of the Friars Minor at Dumfries, where his uncle Elias Duns was superior. After novitiate, John studied at Oxford and Paris and was ordained in 1291. More studies in Paris followed until 1297, when he returned to lecture at Oxford and Cambridge. Four years later, he returned to Paris to teach and complete the requirements for the doctorate.

In Scotus's time, some philosophers held that people are basically determined by forces outside themselves. Free will is an illusion, they argued. Scotus defended the concept of free will with practical examples and illustrations from daily life. He was great defender of the Immaculate Conception of Mary that the university officially adopted his position. That same year the minister general assigned him to the Franciscan school in Cologne where John died in 1308.

Drawing on the work of John Duns Scotus, Pope Pius IX solemnly defined the Immaculate Conception of Mary in 1854. John Duns Scotus was beatified in 1993.

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