

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

**Monday, Fourth Week of Lent**

**When you are purposeful, dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.”**

## **Isaiah 65:17-21**

Isaiah shares his hope, a new optimism with his people that God will renew them and recreate new heavens and a new earth. He says that the things of the past will not be remembered, but God’s people will be blessed with great rejoicing.

## **Psalm 30**

**You changed my mourning into dancing  
and clothed me with gladness.....  
O Lord, my God, for ever will I give you thanks!**

## **John 4:43-54**

The Samaritans and the Galileans believed in Jesus, not because of someone else’s story but because they themselves had heard him, experienced him. What the world lacks or urgently needs today is not religion or church or doctrine or sacred scriptures or more theologians. The world needs men and women who experience God, who have encountered God, whose life has been transformed by their “God-Experience”.

**There is no substitute for personal meeting, personal encounter, personal experience of God.**

The royal official, a man of high standing in Herod’s court comes to a man who had no great social standing, just an ordinary village carpenter from Nazareth. The Official humbled himself, swallowed his pride, refused to be discouraged and showed great faith in a power beyond himself. He found faith in someone in whom it would have been impossible to find faith. He had to surrender to someone less than himself in order to discover someone greater than himself.

**Humility and self-surrender are virtues that allow us to experience God in the most unexpected places, circumstances and people. Learn to be humble in your ways.**

The Official wanted Jesus to come to his house. Jesus asked him to trust his word and the man did. Healing happens at the word of Jesus - healing happens from a distance

with trust in the word of Jesus. The man expressed his faith in a totally trusting relationship.

**True faith is not acceptance of doctrine. It is a trusting relationship.**

**Saint of the Day, March 31 - St. Benjamin and 7 other saints are remembered this day.**

Benjamin was born in Iran around the year 329. We do not have information about his early life. He was a deacon martyred around 424 in Persia. He was executed during a period of persecution of Christians that lasted forty years and through the reign of two Persian kings. The persecution began in response to the burning of the Temple of Fire, the great sanctuary of the Persians, by Bishop Abdas in 420. King Isdegerd threatened to destroy all the churches of the Christians unless the Bishop would rebuild it.

Abdas refused to comply and the threat was executed. Churches were demolished, Abdas himself was put to death, and a general persecution began which lasted forty years. Isdegerd died in 421, but his son and successor, Varanes, carried on the persecution with great fury. The Christians were submitted to the cruelest tortures.

Benjamin was imprisoned for a year for his Christian faith, and later released with the condition that he abandons preaching or speaking of his religion. His release was obtained by the Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II through an ambassador. However, Benjamin declared that it was his duty to preach about Christ and that he could not be silent. As a consequence, he was tortured mercilessly until his death in the year 424 in Persia.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs