

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (*Psalms 63:1-2*)

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek You; I thirst for You, my whole being longs for You, in a dry and parched land where there is no water. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – Born to Thirst

Everyone thirsts for something. Like the Samaritan woman at the well, everyone thirsts for something. The three wise men from the East (cf. Luke 2:1-2) thirsted for knowledge of the truth and followed their star, undaunted by a long and difficult journey from the east to Bethlehem to reach the prize of their search – Baby Jesus, Son of God, and the Eternal Truth. King Herod had a different type of thirst. It was a thirst for power; and he too was ready to do anything to satisfy his thirst; not even balking at the random merciless killing of many innocent baby boys just to have a chance to eradicate a future potential challenger to the throne.

Thirst for material things can never give peace of heart. Inordinate thirst for material things arises from the narrow purpose of self-gratification. It is a manifestation of disorderly self love. The appetite feeds upon itself, the thirst is not quenched and the emptiness of the heart is felt even more strongly than before. The Spirit which tends towards the things of God, struggles against the body which tends towards the things of the earth (cf. Galatians 5:17). This leads to internal disharmony and conflict in the heart. The heart is restless and not at peace.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (Matthew 5:6). As opposed to those who thirst for earthly things, we have God's promises for those who thirst and hunger for righteousness: firstly they are already blessed even before attaining their purpose, secondly, they will be filled eventually – their hearts will not be empty. Those who seek God with all their heart find peace and fulfilment restored to their innermost being. Simeon who had been praying very earnestly for the salvation of the Jewish people was finally rewarded to give witness at the presentation of Baby Jesus in the temple (cf. Luke 2:25-32). Simeon was able to say: *"Sovereign Lord, as You have promised, You now dismiss Your servant in peace, for my eyes have seen Your salvation..."* (cf. Luke 2:29-30). After seeing Baby Jesus - the promised Saviour, Simeon was ready to die in peace.

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field (Matthew 13:44). Those who thirst for Christ and His kingdom can, with joy, put up great personal sacrifices and are propelled by a single pure motive. Like the three wise men they are undaunted by the many obstacles, trials, difficulties and personal costs that lie in the way. For they know the prize is worth well beyond their wildest imagination.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God (Matthew 5:8). Those who thirst for God are very close to God. Their crosses become lighter as contractions and sufferings in their life are welcomed as participation in the Passion of Christ. The lives are more joyful as they disciplined the body to be led by the Spirit, earning internal peace and harmony within themselves. They can love more deeply those around them as they are able to identify Christ in them.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You made my heart for only one purpose: to find its fulfilment in You alone. I have buried my innermost thirst for You by the many earthly things I hold in my heart. Give me the grace to be led by Your Spirit so that all earthly attachments will fall from my heart. Let me feel anew the hunger and thirst of my soul for You so that I, too can become like the three wise men who thought nothing of crossing dangerous rivers and treacherous deserts just to pay You homage. I know You are near me but I need to again re-discover the wondrous treasure that I have in You so that I can be single-hearted in my love and service to You. Lord, give me a great thirst for You! Mary, Protectress of the Faith, intercede for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.