

Jesus † Mary † Joseph
Chapter 12 - Extreme Love of This Life

Christ:

My child, learn wisdom from the folly of worldly people. See how hard they take their worldly losses! For an earthly gain, men will labor and suffer so much, but their spiritual losses are so easily forgotten. They are often interested in matters which have little or no value, and they negligently pass over matters which are important. Their entire attention is often absorbed by external affairs. Unless you fight to control your thoughts, you too will be enslaved by the passing events of the present moment.

2. How foolish are those who do not realize their miserable condition, making this passing earthly life the only object of their desires! Some cling so to this life that, if they could remain here forever, they would not care at all for the Kingdom of God. They would prefer to stay on earth even though they might have to strain and struggle for the bare necessities of this earthly existence.

3. How foolish and blind these people are! They lie buried so deep in earthly things that they enjoy only the pleasures of the senses. In a short while, they will come to the end of their earthly life. Then they will have a bitter realization of the uselessness and nothingness of what they loved.

Think:

The best way to realize the quickly-passing value of earthly attractions, is to look at them in the past. Where are the enjoyments of last year? What became of the glory for which I struggled so hard five years ago? What's left of last summer's pleasures? Gone! All finished and gone! Do I want to go on living for that kind of happiness or do I want perfect, all-satisfying, never-ending happiness? Only a fool would hesitate in answering this question.

Pray:

Lord and Father of all intelligence, may I never be guilty of the supreme folly – the folly of those who believe in living for today's earthly pleasures, without bothering about their eternal salvation. In the Gospel, You speak of the man who sat back and prepared to think only of the pleasure and enjoyment of his earthly possessions. To him You said: "Thou fool! This night will they require thy soul of thee!" He died that night, unprepared to face his Judge. Let me always face life's greatest fact – I live for Heaven or for hell. My earthly life will show what choice I make. My God, give me the strength to live a holy life on earth so that I may receive the eternal reward of Heavenly life with You. Amen.

November 7th

Saint Willibrord – Apostle of the Frisons, of Holland, Zealand, Flanders and Brabant (†657 – ca. 738)

Saint Willibrord was born in Northumberland (northeastern England) in 657. His father left the world to enter a monastery, and is honored as a Saint in the monastery of Echternach in the diocese of Treves, and named in the English calendar. When his son was twenty years old he was already wearing the religious habit. Being accustomed to bearing the yoke of the Lord, and finding it light and sweet, he went to Ireland to seek greater perfection and study under Saint Egbert.

When he was thirty years old he desired, with Saint Swibert and ten other monks of England, to preach the faith in the land of the Frisons, or Vriesland, a province of the Low Countries surrounding the mouth of the Rhine. The Frisons were warriors and had maintained their liberty against the Romans. The Gospel had been preached among them in 678 by Saint Wilfrid, but those efforts had borne little fruit, and the true God was almost entirely unknown among them when the monks arrived.

Willibrord afterwards went on to Rome to ask the papal benediction and authorization to preach the Gospel to the idolatrous nations; he was amply blessed with powers and relics for the churches he would construct. His companion, Saint Swibert, became the bishop of a group residing near Cologne. The other eleven missionaries preached in the part of Vriesland belonging to the French. Saint Willibrord was recommended for episcopal consecration by Pepin, royal Palace Steward of France; Pope Sergius changed his name to Clement and consecrated him Archbishop of the Frisons in Saint Peter's Church in Rome.

He then returned to Utrecht, where he established his residence and built the Church of the Saviour. He repaired the Church of Saint Martin, which later became the Cathedral of Utrecht. He built and governed until his death the abbey of Echternach in Luxembourg. He baptized the son of Charles Martel, named Pepin, who later became king of France. Charles Martel was a benefactor of the churches founded by Saint Willibrord, and conferred on him sovereignty of the city of Utrecht.

Saint Willibrord preached also in Denmark, where a cruel king reigned at that time; the Saint, seeing invincible obstacles to the propagation of the Gospel, merely bought thirty children of the land, whom he baptized and took back with him to Utrecht. He preached on the island of Walcheren, converted many and established several churches. A blow from a saber which an idolatrous priest gave him there made no wound; and the idolatrous priest became possessed by the demon.

Saint Boniface joined him in 720 and spent three years with him before going to Germany. Saint Bede, English historian, wrote of Saint Willibrord, saying he was a venerable old man who had for thirty-six years been a bishop and was "awaiting the rewards of life in heaven, after the generous battles he waged in the spiritual combat." At Utrecht Saint Willibrord founded schools which became famous. He wrought many miracles, and had the gift of prophecy. He labored unceasingly as bishop for more than fifty years, beloved alike of God and of man, and died full of days and good works. This amiable Saint, noted for his gaiety in conversation and his wisdom in counsel, was buried in the monastery of Echternach in Luxembourg.

Sources: Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 13; Little Pictorial Lives of the Saints, a compilation based on Butler's Lives of the Saints and other sources by John Gilmary Shea (Benziger Brothers: New York, 1894).

Daily Thoughts and Prayers For Our Beloved Dead Seventh Day

The Souls in Purgatory appreciate the things of God more fully than we. Enlightened by divine love, they understand the respect and obedience which God merited from them, and the ingratitude and baseness of their sins.

Prayer: Our Father. 3 Hail Marys. Glory Be. De Profundis.

O Lord Jesus Christ, whose adorable Heart sighs for the love and happiness of Thy banished children, we beseech Thee to remember the souls of Thy servants for whom we pray: Command them, we beg of Thee, to be received by Thy holy Angels and with them enjoy eternal happiness and glory in Heaven. Amen.

Ejaculation: O Sweetest Heart of Jesus, I implore that I may ever love Thee more and more. (300 days)
De Profundis (Psalm 129)

1 Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord:

2 Lord, hear my voice. Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

3 If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand it.

4 For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of Thy law, I have waited for Thee, O Lord. My soul hath relied on His Word:

5 My soul hath hoped in the Lord.

6 From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

7 Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plentiful redemption.

8 And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Source: Douay Rheims Bible, Imp. 1899

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