

Daily Parish Communication

May 2, 2023

Good Morning!

Hilltopper Tuesday! Join the gang at 11:30 for lunch, companionship, and to hear today's speaker: Deacon Chet Johns!

1. Today's Readings: [Memorial of Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: St. Athanasius whose feast we celebrate today, was bishop of Alexandria. He is a Doctor of the Church, one of the four great Fathers of the East. He is called the "Father of Orthodoxy," the "Pillar of the Church" and "Champion of Christ's Divinity." Athanasius became one of the most dedicated opponents of the heresy of Arianism. Much of his life was a testimony to the divinity of Jesus Christ. He died in 373. In his writing which we share today, he commends the reading of the book of Psalms. (Please note that his numbering of the psalms can be slightly different from that of many Bibles today. He mentions psalm 50, for example, which is commonly numbered #51.)

3. Quotes of the Day:

~"Athanasius was the greatest champion of Catholic belief on the subject of the Incarnation that the Church has ever known..." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*

~"The demons...first make an attack by temptation and place hindrances to hamper our way, to wit, evil thoughts. But we need not fear their suggestions, for by prayer, fasting, and faith in the Lord their attack immediately fails." *St. Athanasius, The Life of Saint Antony*

~"Nor is it lawful to say that the Lord was in terror, at whom the keepers of hell's gates shuddered...Therefore be every heretic dumb, nor dare to ascribe terror to the Lord whom death, as a serpent, flees, at whom demons tremble, and the sea is in alarm; for whom the heavens are rent and all the powers are shaken." *St. Athanasius, Against the Arians*

St. Athanasius, Pray for Us!
St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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The Psalms, A Mirror of the Soul

Since the very beginning, the book of Psalms has formed a beloved source of Christian liturgy and private devotion. St. Athanasius commends a friend for studying the book, and notes how we can make its prayers our own.

I commend you for reading the book of Psalms, striving to understand the meaning of each one. I too have a great affection for that book. It displays a certain charming precision of expression for those who are given to prayer.

The one who takes up the Psalter to pray recognizes the words there as his very own. And the one who hears the Psalter chanted is deeply moved, as though he himself were speaking. It seems to me, then, that these words become like a mirror to the one who sings them, so that he might see himself and the emotions of his soul.

When someone in tribulation sings the third psalm, for example, he recognizes that the words belong to him. In singing the 11th and 16th psalms, he realizes that he himself is the one announcing his confidence in prayer. In the 50th, he's speaking the words appropriate for his own repentance.

When someone sings psalms 53, 55, 56, and 141, he does not ponder how someone else is persecuted, but how he himself is affected by persecution. These words he chants to the Lord as his own.

In general, then, each Psalm is both composed and spoken by the Spirit so that in these same words, the stirrings of our soul might be grasped. All these words can be spoken as if they concern us, and come from our lips as if our own words, as a memorial of our emotions and a chastening of our life. For the words of the Psalms can be both examples and standards for us. I believe that the whole of human existence, both dispositions of the soul and the movements of the mind, have been measured out and encompassed in the words of the Psalter.

-By St. Athanasius, letter to Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms

In God's presence, consider...

Am I making good use of the Psalms in prayer? The Church includes a reading from the Psalms each day in the liturgy; might I benefit from reading and meditating on it privately?

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for including the Psalms in your Word as a mirror for my soul. Teach me to look deeply into that mirror so that I may know you and know, myself aright.

Source: A Year with the Saints by Paul Thigpen