Friday after Ash Wednesday

Stealing

"Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation. And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." St. Dismus

ST. DISMUS

All that is known of Dismas is that he is the Good Thief crucified with Christ on Calvary. The other thief is known as Gestas. "These two thieves were led away to be put to death with Jesus. One of the criminals who was hanging railed at Jesus, saying, 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!' When Dismas heard the blasphemy of the bad thief, Dismas responded: "We, indeed, are justly condemned to death on the cross: but this man hath done no evil." Dismas knows that he has earned his crucifixion and so acknowledges his wrongdoings. Dismas was confessing his sins and proclaiming the innocent of Jesus. How sweet these words must have been to the Heart of Jesus! After hearing unjust condemnations by so many, Jesus hears the words: "This man has done no evil."

Dismas then continues speaking with words that will resonate until the end of time: "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Dismas' profession of faith was a result of the Holy Spirit pouring His grace into the heart of the good thief. Dismas' words showed that he considered himself to be the redeemed servant of God. Even though he is aware that he has lived a terribly sinful life, Dismas is expressing a humble and total confidence in the mercy and love of God. Jesus knew about every sin that Dismas had ever committed. He knew about the sins that Dismas could remember, and He knew about the sins that Dismas had probably long forgotten. And Jesus responded in a way that only the King of Glory could respond, saying: "Amen, I say to you, this day you shall be with me in Paradise."

St. Dismas was a thief or someone who sought their security in stealing from others. When he was next to Jesus he saw an innocent man who was about to have his life stolen away from him by thieves. As a thief, Dismas could recognize well an act of theft. We have all probably stolen something from another during our lives and so been a thief. However, we might have never reflected how we have tried to take security from God and so sought to steal from God. God wants to give us the security of eternal life if we just acknowledge our thefts and trust in God's security rather than our own.

For your prayer

St. Dismas would have heard Isaiah 58:1-9 during his life. Reflect on how you have stolen from others and ultimately from God in your life by seeking to steal security through greed. Read Isaiah 58:1-9 and acknowledge your sins and desire to find your security in God.