Tuesday of 3rd Week of Lent

RELATIONSHIP

"Filthy talk makes us feel comfortable with filthy action. But the one who knows how to control the tongue is prepared to resist the attacks of lust." - St. Clement

ST JUSTINA OF ANTIOCH

St. Justina was an amazing woman of fortitude. She was a convert to Christianity as a teenager and brought her parents to belief in Christ as well. She dedicated herself to Christ, refusing a marriage proposal from a suitor, Aglaides. Through the power of the sorcerer Cyprian, Justina was tempted by multiple demons (during her prayers, nonetheless) to lustfully desire the suitor she had just rejected. Cyprian was a native of Antioch who became a practitioner of sorcery and black magic. When Aglaides, a young pagan, fell in love with the beautiful Justina, a Christian of Antioch, he asked Cyprian to help him win her. Cyprian tried all his black magic and diabolical expertise to win her for himself but was repelled by her faith and the aid of Mary. When Cyprian realized the overwhelming power of the forces arrayed against him and the devil, Cyprian converted to Christianity. He destroyed his magical books, gave his wealth to the poor, and was baptized, as was Aglaides. Justina then gave away her possessions and dedicated herself to God.

St. Justina prayed this prayer, O Lord Jesus Christ, my God, lo, mine enemies have risen up against me and have prepared a snare for my feet! My soul is brought low, but I have remembered Thy name in the night and am made glad. When they compassed me round about, I have fled unto Thee, hoping that mine adversary might not rejoice over me, for Thou knowest, O Lord my God, that I am Thy handmaiden. For Thee have I kept the purity of my body, and to Thee have I entrusted my soul; wherefore, preserve Thou Thy lamb, O good Shepherd. Do not permit the beast which seeketh to devour me to consume me, and grant me to prevail over the evil desires of my flesh.

Lust is the sin where we can start to value a relationship with a human being over our relationship with God. Every relationship we have needs to come second to our relationship with God. For only by having a good relationship with God can we have a good relationship with anyone else. St. Justina had such a strong relationship with God and Mary that she recognized the relationship with Aglaides was not the right one for her. Her relationship with God also allowed her to forgive both Aglaides and Cyprian when they wronged her. How have you put relationships with others over your relationship with God?

For your prayer

St. Justina would have prayed with Matthew 18:21-35. Use your imagination as you slowly read Matthew 18:21-35. Please reflect on how God has forgiven you of many debts in your relationship with God. Reflect on how God is inviting you to forgive someone you have been in a relationship with who might have offended you.