

Day Twenty-Two: Wednesday, March 18

From Today's Gospel:

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven." (Adapted from Matthew 5:17-19)

Reflection:

The Jewish people had been waiting for a savior for a long time. When Jesus came, He fulfilled all the promises God had made. He brought salvation, not only to the Jewish people, but to all of us. But our relationship with God is a two-way street. He teaches us the difference between right and wrong, good and evil; and He has given us commandments that will lead us down the right path. Following God's commandments brings us happiness. They are signposts on the road to Heaven. Jesus reminds us how important it is to be faithful to the commandments of God.

Journaling Prompt:

How does following God's commandments bring us happiness? How do those commandments make the world a better place?

Today's Challenge:

Review the Ten Commandments. Make sure you know what each of them means. If there is one that is particularly difficult for you, resolve to do better at keeping it. Ask God to help you.

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem

Born: 315

Died: 386

Cyril was raised in Jerusalem right after Emperor Constantine declared it legal to practice Christianity. The years of persecution and martyrdom had ended. However, a new challenge arose. There was much confusion about what Christians did and did not believe. There were many false teachings being spread called heresies.

Cyril became a bishop after St. Maximus died. Cyril was a great defender of Church teaching. He served as bishop of Jerusalem for thirty-five years. Three times he was run out of town by people who taught the heresy of Arianism. They were trying to force Cyril to accept false teachings about Jesus and the Church. He spent sixteen years in hiding and exile.

One of the greatest battles Cyril fought was against Emperor Julian, who came to power in 361. He wanted to show that Jesus was wrong when he said the Temple could not be rebuilt. Many people brought jewels and precious metals for the temple. Cyril knew it wouldn't be built, because God had said so. One day Cyril looked at the collected materials and declared, "I know this will fail." He was right. First a storm, then an earthquake, and then a fire stopped the temple from being built. The emperor finally gave up on the project.

Cyril died in 386 at the age of seventy. He is known for being heroic in teaching the truth of Jesus and His Church.

He is also known for how one should receive the Eucharist in their hand, if it done with reverence and a common practice of the church you regularly attend:

Holy Communion under the form of bread is offered to the communicant with the words "The body of Christ." The communicant may choose

whether to receive the body of Christ in the hand or on the tongue. When receiving in the hand, the communicant should be guided by the words of St. Cyril of Jerusalem: “When you approach, take care not to do so with your hand stretched out and your fingers open or apart, but rather place your left hand as a throne beneath your right, as befits one who is about to receive the King. Then receive him, taking care that nothing is lost” (41).