



***“Some fell into good soil, and when it grew,
it produced a hundredfold...”***

(Lk 8:8)

Divine Liturgy

Sunday at 11:30 am

Our Lady of Victory

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First Reading: 1Corinthians 3:1-11

I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food.

Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh.

For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations?

For when one says, "I belong to Paul,"

and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul?

Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each.

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each.

For we are God's servants, working together;

you are God's field, God's building.

According to the grace of God given to me,

like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it.

Each builder must choose with care how to build on it.

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

The Gospel: Luke 8:1-8

Jesus went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God.

The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities:

Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to him,

he said in a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed,

some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up.

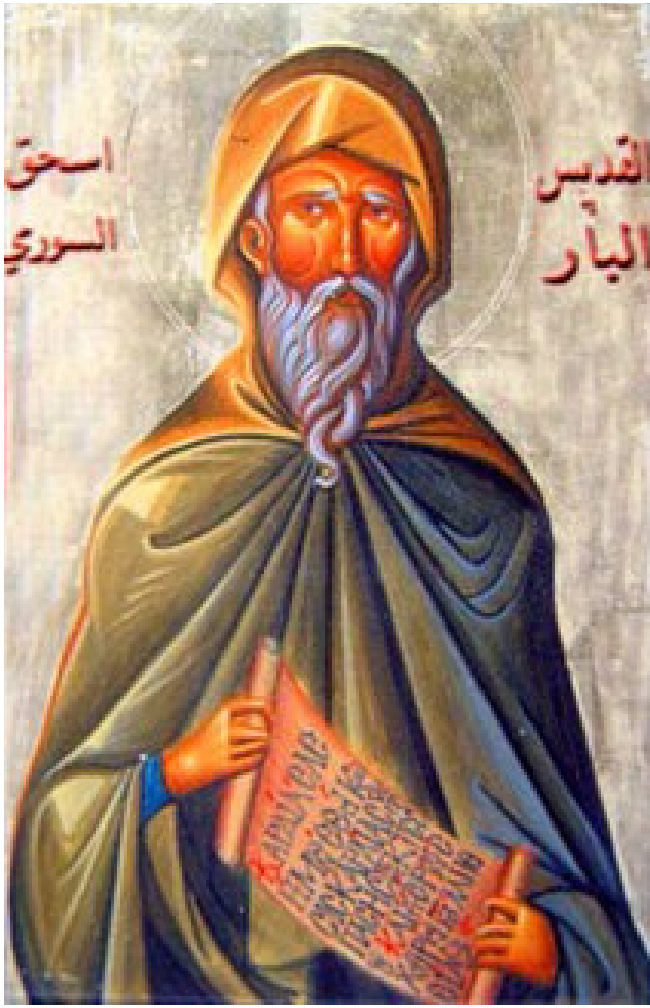
Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture.

Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it.

Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold."

As he said this, he called out, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

St Isaac the Syrian (c. 613 – c. 700)



The Feast of St Isaac the Syrian is celebrated by the Maronite church on August 23rd. He was born around 613 A.D. in modern-day Qatar, which was then an important center of Christianity.

When still quite young, he entered a monastery with his brother. His fame grew as a holy man and teacher. He was subsequently ordained bishop of Nineveh (now Mosul in Iraq), but requested to abdicate after only five months. The administrative duties did not suit his retiring and ascetic bent. He then went south to the wilderness of Mount Matout, a refuge for hermits. There he lived in solitude for many years studying the Scriptures and fasting, eating only three loaves of bread a week along with uncooked vegetables. Eventually, blindness and old age forced him to retire to the monastery of Rabban Shabur in Iraq, where he reposed and was buried.

St. Isaac is remembered for his spiritual homilies on the ascetic way of life, where he guides his readers and disciples into the secrets of the inner life.

St. Isaac's writings offer a rare example of a large corpus of ascetical texts written by an experienced hermit who belonged to the Syriac tradition. Thus, they constitute an important source in understanding early Christian (and Syriac) asceticism. Perhaps his best summary of monastic life is to be found in the following lines: *"By stillness of the body and ceasing from this world, solitaries imagine the true stillness and the withdrawal from nature which will occur at the end of the corporeal world. By means of the mind, they are united with the world of the spirit. By means of meditation they are involved in the expanse above. Thus, symbolically, they remain continually in the future reality."*

His teaching is marked by a strong sense of divine providence that calls us to have faith in God and be still in waiting for him: *"Do not try to make your course run more quickly than the Divine Will wishes; do not be in such a hurry that you try to get ahead of the Providence which is guiding you."*





Reflecting on God's mercy, he says: "As a handful of sand thrown into the ocean, so are the sins of all flesh as compared with the mind of God; as a fountain that flows abundantly is not dammed by a handful of earth, so the compassion of the Creator is not overcome by the wickedness of the creatures."

He says on prayer:

"At the time of darkness, more than anything else, kneeling is helpful." In the same vein, perhaps as a good response to the complaint that we are always distracted in prayer, he teaches his disciples:

"You should not wait until you are cleansed of wandering thoughts before you desire to pray.

If you only begin on prayer when you see that your mind has become perfect and raised above all recollection of the world, then you will never pray."

In other words, start praying now!



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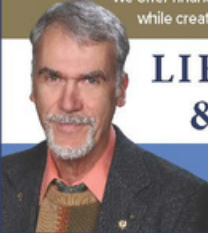
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