

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Wednesday of the Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time

*The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church*

After yesterday's solemnity of the two pillars of the Church, Peter and Paul, we have those who suffered martyrdom in Rome about the year 64 when Nero accused the Christians of burning Rome. These Christians "were tortured, crucified, and burned alive . . . in Nero's gardens on the Vatican Hill" (from the ORDO).

The wisdom of monogamy. Abram made the blunder of not waiting for God to inform him of the child of the promise. The barren and elderly Sarai persuaded Abram that he could seek a child through another, Hagar, her Egyptian maidservant (Genesis 16). At the covenant (chapter 17), God changes their names to Abraham and Sarah. Sarah becomes irate at Hagar, who begins to look down upon Sarah because she cannot conceive. Once Isaac, the child of the promise is born, Sarah turns on Hagar, who departs with Ishmael. Yet, God in His mercy takes care of them – "The Lord hears the cry of the poor" – and will make of Ishmael "a great nation."

Jesus cures two demoniacs. The swineherders lose their livelihood because the demons were sent into the swine, ran down the steep bank, and drowned in the sea. It seems both swineherders and residents of the town care more about swine than the two individuals who were liberated from evil spirits as they beg Jesus to leave. We can become blind of the works of God!

The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church, pray for us!

God Love You!

*Fr. Jim Starasovich*

