

Saint Thomas of Villanova (1488-1555) is a Spanish Augustinian monk and archbishop who lived a life of austerity in order to provide for the spiritual and material needs of his people. He was born in Fuentellana, Spain. His father was a miller who regularly distributed food and provisions to the poor, as did his mother.



First Reading: (Prov 21:1-6, 10-13)

The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart. To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin. The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but every one who is hasty comes only to want. The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapour and a snare of death. The soul of the wicked desires evil; his neighbour finds no mercy in his eyes. When a scoffer is punished, the simple becomes wise; when a wise man is

instructed, he gains knowledge. The righteous observes the house of the wicked; the wicked are cast down to ruin. He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out and not be heard.

Ps 118:1, 27, 30, 34-35, 44

R./ Guide me, Lord, in the path of your commands.

Gospel: (Lk 8:19-21) The mother of Jesus and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him for the crowd. And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." But he said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

Reflection: "Whoever does the will of God" This identifies Jesus' real relatives as those who hear and do the will of God. This answers the desire of so many people who long to belong to the family of Jesus. There is a loyalty which surpasses all earthly loyalties. There is something greater than the dearest things on earth. What a privilege it is to know that if we really listen to Him and obey His word we are as closely related to him as his mother and brothers. Jesus' spiritual family shares His life and fellowship. **When we commit ourselves totally to Christ and follow His ways we create a universal family where no boundaries exist.** Unfortunately as Christians we have built walls around us by our prejudice towards one another. "There is an extremely powerful force", said Albert Einstein, "that so far science has not found a formal explanation to. It is a force that includes and governs all others, and is even behind any phenomenon operating in the universe and has not been identified by us. This universal force is love." The only force that can unite humanity.