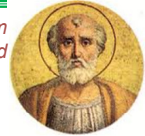


St Callistus: Tradition has it that Callistus was a slave who when obtained freedom was made a deacon by Pope Zephyrinus and later succeeded him. He was martyred in 222 and buried on the Via Aurelia.



First Reading: (Rom 3:21-30) The righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On the principle of works? No, but on the principle of faith. For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one.

Ps 129;1-6

R./ With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Gospel: (Lk 11:47-54) Jesus said to the lawyers, "Woe to you! for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it shall be required of this generation. Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering." As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard, and to provoke him to speak of many things, lying in wait for him, to catch at something he might say.

REFLECTION

Paul thought that he was a righteous Pharisee who was blameless before Law. But in his transforming encounter with the risen Jesus, he realized that it is not the practice of Law that leads to salvation or wholeness but faith in Jesus Christ as the centre of one's life. In his encounter with Jesus he has been granted forgiveness and reconciliation and now he is a justified or sanctified sinner. Laws and lawyers of Jesus' time either condemned people or made them self-righteous. **No efforts of ours without Christ and his Spirit can make us whole and holy. But with faith in Jesus we can become truly ourselves and the glory of God!**