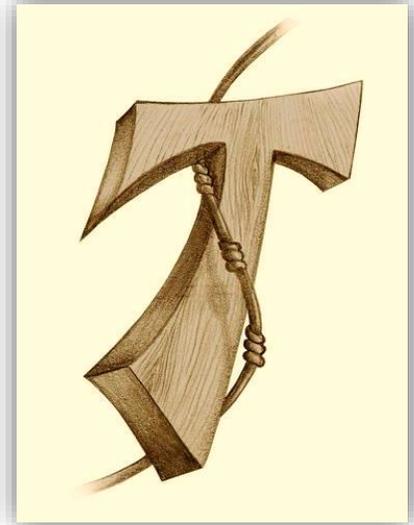


**March 25**

**Venerable Jane Mary of the Cross**

Good day, good people. May the Lord give you peace!

Our visitor today was born on the day that we commemorate the finding of the True Cross. This event imprinted itself upon our guest so profoundly that it served as the source of her meditations to the very day that she died. Jane Mary of the Cross was born in 1603, and beginning at a young age, she demonstrated a deep and abiding love of God.



She entered the Poor Clare monastery and eventually was elected the abbess. This ministry proved to be a difficult and painful experience. She experienced so much resistance from the Sisters in the Community that she had to be removed from office. Later, they reinstated her in the office of abbess, but things did not improve appreciably. Conflicts even arose against her from outside of the monastic community. She bore these insults with equanimity and patience.

Surprisingly, at the same time these sufferings were upon her, she was recognized as a kind of local wisdom figure. People from all strata of society came to visit her seeking her counsel. Simple lay people as well as clerics of the highest rank sought her out.

As we reflect upon the life of Jane Mary, I believe that she stands as a paragon of the virtue of fortitude. This cardinal virtue provided her a great source of wisdom and grace. It has the same power for us, too. We all have our "crosses" to bear and they can be very wearisome, but if we can access this virtue in ourselves we will be able to pass through the difficulty to a better state of being.

Let us pray.

God ever faithful, call forth within us the wellspring of fortitude in our daily life. Let us not be worn down by the challenges and difficulties of our day. May we live the assurance that only you can give. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives with you and the Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Jane Mary of the Cross is a friend of God, the company we welcome today.