

St Margaret of Scotland was born in Hungary, where her father lived in exile, about the year 1046. She was given in marriage to Malcom III, king of the Scots, and she bore him eight children. She was an outstanding example of a true mother and queen. She died at Edinburgh in the year 1093



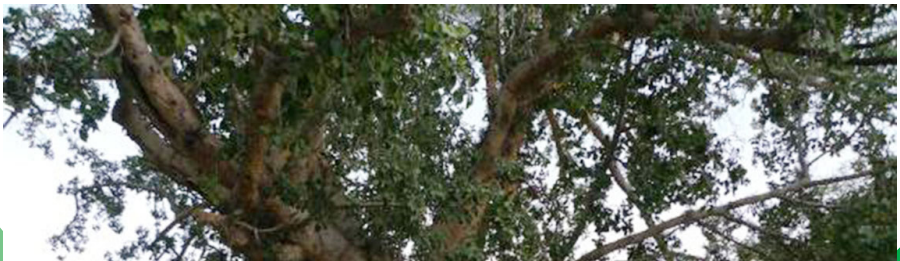
First Reading: (2 Macc 6:18-31) Eleazar, one of the scribes in high position, a man now advanced in age and of noble presence, was being forced to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. But he, welcoming death with honour rather than life with pollution, went up to the rack of his own accord, spitting out the flesh, as men ought to go who have the courage to refuse things that it is not right to taste, even for the natural love of life. Those who were in charge of that unlawful sacrifice took the man aside, because of their long acquaintance with him, and privately urged him to bring meat of his own providing, proper for him to use, and pretend that he was eating the flesh of the sacrificial meal which had been commanded by the king, so that by doing this he might be saved from death, and be treated kindly on account of his old friendship with them. But making a high resolve, worthy of his years and the dignity of his old age and the gray hairs which he had reached with distinction and his excellent life even from childhood, and moreover according to the holy God-given law, he declared himself quickly, telling them to send him to Hades. "Such pretence is not worthy of our time of life," he said, "lest many of the young should suppose that Eleazar in his ninetieth year has gone over to an alien religion, and through my pretence, for the sake of living a brief moment longer, they should be led astray because of me, while

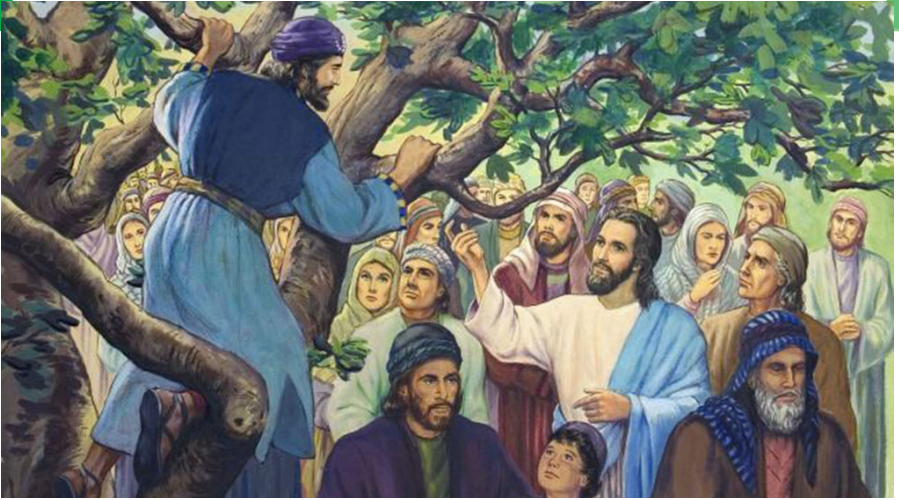
I defile and disgrace my old age. For even if for the present I should avoid the punishment of men, yet whether I live or die I shall not escape the hands of the Almighty. Therefore, by manfully giving up my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age and leave to the young a noble example of how to die a good death willingly and nobly for the revered and holy laws." When he had said this, he went at once to the rack. And those who a little before had acted toward him with good will now changed to ill will, because the words he had uttered were in their opinion sheer madness. When he was about to die under the blows, he groaned aloud and said: "It is clear to the Lord in his holy knowledge that, though I might have been saved from death, I am enduring terrible sufferings in my body under this beating, but in my soul I am glad to suffer these things because I fear him." So in this way he died, leaving in his death an example of nobility and a memorial of courage, not only to the young but to the great body of his nation.

Ps 3:2-7

R./ The Lord upholds me.

Gospel: (Lk 19:1-10) Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed





up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

REFLECTION

The episode tells us **the five steps of conversion and transformation in the person of Zachaeus and thus in every person.** 1) He had the earnest desire to see Jesus. We have to have the earnest desire to encounter and experience God in our life. 2) He recognized the internal (he is short) and external (there is the crowd) obstacles that prevent him from encountering Jesus. Recognize the internal and external obstacles that prevent us from encountering God. 3) He used his cleverness to overcome the obstacle and decided to climb up the tree. Take the necessary steps from our part to overcome the obstacles. 4) In the presence of Jesus he looked into himself and found his unworthiness. Sit in silence before the Lord realizing how he has loved us, called us, forgiven us, in spite of what we are. 5) He made the decision to be a new person i.e., to be just and generous. Moved by the Holy Spirit make the necessary resolutions and steps to renew our life.