

## **MORNING MEDITATION**

### **Friday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Serenity comes from accepting and respecting that everything and everybody has value and purpose.**

#### **Isaiah 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8**

Hezekiah was seriously ill and near death. Isaiah, the prophet asked him to put everything in order before he died. Hezekiah prayed for healing and he experienced the healing power of the Lord.

**Remember those who need healing and bless them with your prayer today.**

#### **Isaiah 38:10-11**

Once I said, "In the noontime of life I must depart!  
To the gates of the nether world I shall be consigned for the rest of my years."  
I said, "I shall see the LORD no more in the land of the living.  
No longer shall I behold my fellow men among those who dwell in the world."

#### **Mathew 12:1-8**

This excerpt tells us the story of the disciples plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath Day. The scribes and the Pharisees became more suspicious of a teacher who allowed his disciples to violate the Sabbath law. This kind of thing could not be allowed to spread unchecked. The problem was that the Sabbath law was broken. Jesus used this occasion to teach certain basic values: The claim of human need must take precedence over all other claims; The claims of worship, the claims of ritual, the claims of liturgy are important, but prior to any of them is the claim of human need. Jesus insisted that the greatest ritual service is the service of human need. Steadfast love takes precedence over ritual sacrifice.

What God desires far more than ritual sacrifice is kindness, the spirit which knows no law other than that it must answer the call of human need. Man is not at the service of the law. The law is at the service of man. Jesus called his disciples to go beyond rituals service, church service, synagogue service, to the service of human need. In fact, the Gospels tell us of only one synagogue service that Jesus conducted. But we have an abundance of incidence of Jesus at the service of human need.

**Christian service is involvement in the demands and problems and tragedies of the human situation.**

## **Saint of the Day, July 17 - Saint Francis Solano and 50 other saints remembered this day**

Francis Solano was born on March 10, 1549 in Montilla, Spain. He was educated by the Jesuits, but felt drawn to the poverty and penitential life of the Franciscan friars. At the age of twenty, he joined the Order of Friars Minor at Montilla, entering the novitiate at St. Lawrence Friary. The community there belonged to the Reformed observance within the Order, following a very strict routine of prayer, silence and fasting. Francis followed this regimen rigorously, always going barefoot, abstaining from meat, and wearing a hairshirt throughout that entire year. As a result, however, his health was permanently affected, leaving him sick and fatigued.

Francis was solemnly professed in 1569. He was then sent to the friary of Our Lady of Loreto in Seville for his seminary studies. There he learned not only philosophy and theology but developed his musical talents. He was ordained a priest in 1576. He was then named Master of Ceremonies for the community. Still a lover of simplicity, Francis made a small cell for himself by the chapel of the friary, made of clay and reeds. After completing his final theological studies, he was assigned as an itinerant preacher to the surrounding villages of the region. He was eventually given a license as a confessor. During this period, he requested that he might be allowed to go to North Africa, with the hope of achieving martyrdom for preaching the Catholic faith. He was denied this request.

After the death of his father, Francis returned to his hometown of Montilla to care for his mother. During that time, he gained the reputation of a wonderworker, as a number of people were cured of their afflictions through his intercession. In 1583, he cared for the sick and the dying when a pestilence broke out at Granada. His care for the sick during this epidemic drew so much admiration that he became embarrassed and asked to be sent to the African missions. Instead he was sent to South America in 1589. While working in what is now Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay, Francis quickly learned the local languages and was well received by the indigenous peoples. His visits to the sick often included playing a song on his violin.

Around 1601, he was called to Lima, Peru, where he tried to recall the Spanish colonists to their baptismal integrity. Francis also worked to defend the indigenous peoples from oppression. He died in Lima in 1610 and was canonized a saint in 1726.

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