

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

**Wednesday, Sixteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**God's forbearance is his kindness and mercy  
intended to call you to conversion, repentance and change of heart.**

**(Romans 2:4)**

## **Jeremiah 1:1, 4-10**

Jeremiah protested that he was too young to be a prophet. But he heard the voice of God saying to him, "to whomever I send, you shall go and whatever I put in your mouth, you shall speak". So he responded to God's call which required of him to, "gird up your loins, stand up and tell them" what God had revealed. God promised to be with him and make him a "pillar of iron and a wall of brass" against whom none would prevail. Being empowered by God Jeremiah began his mission. He spoke and begged his people to change, reform and turn to God's ways....Jeremiah failed to reform his people. But he remained faithful to the mission God had given him.

**God calls and empowers us to respond and be faithful to his call through difficult times.**

## **Psalm 71**

**In you, O Lord, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.  
In your justice, rescue me and deliver me;  
Incline your ear to me and save me.**

## **Mathew 13:1-9**

Jesus began to teach them in parables. In this Gospel passage, we read about the parable of the farmer going out to sow seeds. The seeds, which fell on various kinds of unproductive soil, failed to yield and the seeds, which fell on good soil, yielded abundance. The farmer keeps sowing knowing well that some of the seeds may fall on the wayside or among thorns or on rocky ground and may become unproductive. But he knows that some will fall on good soil and will yield. He also knows that if he wants a good harvest, he has to prepare the soil, he has to choose good seeds, he has to sow and allow the seeds to sprout. He knows that if he wants a harvest, he has to sow even if some seeds may not meet his expectations.

**The preacher must keep preaching, the teacher must keep teaching, the parent must keep loving, caring, educating and forming the character of children...knowing well that all that is taught may not be learned, all the love may not be fruitful, all children may not learn, all efforts may not be successful.....**

**Be faithful to your calling! All you do may not be successful in your eyes. The real success lies in your fidelity to who you are and what you have come to know as your calling.**

## **Saint of the day, July 24 - St. Charbel Makhlef and 27 other saints are remembered this day**

Youssef Antoun Makhlef was born on May 8, 1828. They lived in the village of Bekaa Kafra, possibly the highest in the Lebanese mountains. Youssef was raised by an uncle because his father, a mule driver, died when he was only three. His mother remarried a man who went on to seek Holy Orders and became the parish priest of the village.

Youssef was raised in a pious home and became drawn to the lives of the saints and to the hermit life, as was practiced by two of his uncles. As a young boy, he was responsible for caring for the family's small flock. He would take the flock to a grotto nearby, where he had installed an icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He would spend the day in prayer.

In 1851, Youssef left his family and entered the Lebanese Maronite Order at the Monastery of Our Lady in Mayfouq to begin his training as a monk, later transferring to the Monastery of St. Maron in Annaya, located in the Byblos District near Beirut. Here he received the religious habit of a monk and took the name Charbel, after a Christian martyr in Antioch from the 2nd century. He made his final religious profession in the Order on November 1, 1853.

As a young monk Charbel began his study of philosophy and theology at the Monastery of Saints Cyprian & Justina in Kfifan, in the Batroun District of Lebanon, to prepare himself for receiving Holy Orders. He was ordained a priest six years later, on July 23, 1859. He was sent back to St. Maron Monastery, where he lived a life of severe asceticism in the monastery.

In 1875, Charbel was granted by the abbot of the monastery the privilege of living as a hermit at the Hermitage of Saints Peter and Paul, a chapel under the care of the monastery. He spent the next 23 years living as a solitary hermit, until his death from a stroke on December 24, 1898.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs