

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Forbearance is an attitude of reasoned patience toward evil.

(Fulton J. Sheen)

2 Samuel 15:13-14, 30 & 16:5-13

David was in deep trouble. Rebellion had broken out. Many Israelites transferred their loyalty to Absalom. David left Jerusalem with his servants from the disaster that he expected from Absalom. With covered head, walking barefoot, David wept at the defection of Absalom. This excerpt describes the subsequent events as David and his men continued on the road.

Psalm 3

**When I lie down in sleep, I wake again,
for the Lord sustains me in sleep.
I fear not the myriads of people,
arrayed against me on every side.**

Mark 5:1-20

Encounter with Jesus brings freedom to a man who was demon-possessed.

Encounter with Jesus is always a freeing experience.

Jesus sends the demons into the swine. The place of demons is with the swine - not with people.

The man and his neighbors who were convinced that they were under oppression of demons encountered a greater power - a power that does not oppress but frees.

The power of God, the power of Grace, the power of love is always freeing - never oppressive.

The value of a person cannot be compared with the value of a herd of swine. But people did compare. It did not matter that a man regained his good senses - all that mattered was that their pigs perished. So, they were afraid - they had "some-thing" to lose, and that "some-thing" was more important than the loss of people.

Stay focused on higher values. Helping people is more important than profit or gain.

Saint of the Day, January 29 - Servant of God Brother Juniper and 12 other saints are remembered this day.

Servant of God Brother Juniper was a simple man who joined Saint Francis in the earliest days of the Order. Saint Francis praised him and wished he had a “whole forest of such Junipers,”

We don't know much about Juniper before he joined the friars in 1210. Francis sent him to establish “places” for the friars in Gualdo Tadino and Viterbo. When Saint Clare was dying, Juniper consoled her. He was devoted to the passion of Jesus and was known for his simplicity.

Several stories about Juniper in the Little Flowers of St. Francis illustrate his exasperating generosity. Once Juniper was taking care of a sick man who had a craving to eat pig's feet. This helpful friar went to a nearby field, captured a pig and cut off one foot, and then served this meal to the sick man. The owner of the pig was furious and immediately went to Juniper's superior. When Juniper saw his mistake, he apologized profusely. He also ended up talking this angry man into donating the rest of the pig to the friars!

Another time Juniper had been commanded to quit giving part of his clothing to the half-naked people he met on the road. Desiring to obey his superior, Juniper once told a man in need that he couldn't give the man his tunic, but he wouldn't prevent the man from taking it either. In time, the friars learned not to leave anything lying around, for Juniper would probably give it away. He died in 1258 and is buried at Ara Coeli Church in Rome.

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