

MORNING MEDITATION

Monday, Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

**Serenity is peaceful communion with God and all that is of God
and from God.**

Ezekiel 24:15-23

In this excerpt, we read about Ezekiel's effort to prepare his people in Exile in Babylon for the coming destruction of their temple and all that surround it. The prophet tells his people that this was the consequence of their sin, but they will come to know God again.

Deuteronomy 32:18-21

**You were unmindful of the rock that begot you.
You forgot the God who gave you birth.
When the Lord saw this, he was filled with loathing
And anger toward his sons and daughters.**

Mathew 19:16-22

Young man, in all sincerity, seeks perfection in the Kingdom. But his possessions block him from taking the further step of full freedom.

What seems to be getting in the way of your own search for goodness, truth, love, service, spirituality...your perfection? What do you hang on to that you need to let go of?

This story reveals the meaning of "eternal life" - not in the sense of lasting or everlasting, but in the sense of "what befits God", life that is characteristic of God. Eternal life is life such as God himself lives - a life of benevolent, gracious loving and giving.

The essence of eternal life is not carefully calculated observance of commandments, rules and regulations - but an attitude of loving and sacrificial giving. It is benevolence. It is living God's way, imaging God, in real life, as people created in God's image.

The young man in the story walked away from eternal life, unable to let go of himself and his possessions..... How about you? Accept the challenge? Walk away disappointed?

Saint of the Day, August 17 - St. Joan of the Cross and 26 other saints are remembered this day.

Jeanne was born on June 18, 1666 in Saumur, France, She was the youngest of twelve children. Throughout much of her childhood and early life she was described as very selfish, thinking only of herself. Her father was a draper, and her mother ran a shop selling religious goods, catering to pilgrims to a local shrine to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

She took this business over at the age of 25 when her mother died. She also provided accommodation to pilgrims who were visiting the shrine. The fact, however, that her only goal was to make money from them was apparent when she opened her store on Sundays, an unusual practice in that period.

On Pentecost 1693, Jeanne encountered a poor widow and pilgrim from Rennes, named Francoise Fouchet, who predicted that Jeanne would one day spend her life caring for the poor. Though Jeanne was already a devout person, this prediction was met with skepticism; but as time passed, caring for the less fortunate is exactly what Jeanne came to do. She began caring for orphans and living a truly spiritual life, to the point where she eventually closed the family business to commit herself more fully to this work. As she converted her ways, many doubted her sincerity, but she was not discouraged.

Jeanne, along with other women who shared her vision of helping the needy, founded the Sisters of Saint Anne of Providence of Samur. It was then she took the religious name of Joan of the Cross. The congregation was formally approved by the Vatican in 1704.

Jeanne Delanoue died on August 17, 1736 at Fencet, France, of natural causes. At the time of her death there were twelve communities of her sisters, spread throughout France, serving the poor and needy. Pope John Paul II canonized her in 1982.

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