

MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Simplify your life by reducing your possessions and your consumption.

Amos 8:4-6, 9-12

In this excerpt, Amos gives us a description of the way the rich in his time treated the poor. They looked for ways to oppress the poor and take advantage of them. The business men went so low as to sell even “the refuse of the wheat”. Amos warned them of the day famine will break upon the land if they did not repent and change their ways and become just in their dealings with all people. He said to them that they may not even hear God’s word even if they listened because they were unjust to their neighbors.

Psalm 119

**Happy are they, who observe his decrees,
Who seek him with all their heart.
With all my heart I seek you;
Let me not stray from your commands.**

Mathew 9:9-13

One of the most unlikely candidates was Mathew and he was called and he followed. Mathew was a man who not only extorted his own people but also swindled the government. Jesus saw not only what Mathew was but also what he could be - So Jesus called and Mathew responded. What does this say to you? What does it mean to you?

Reflect on what Mathew lost and what Mathew found. He lost a comfortable job, income, security, power.....But he found a new mission, honor, adventure, peace, joy, love, destiny, treasure eternal - wealth that he never dreamed of.

Jesus sat with Mathew and few others like him. To sit at table with the likes of Mathew!!!!
Jesus did much more. He dined with Mathew and others like him.

What does this mean to you, in the context of your own life today?

“I came not to call the righteous but sinners”. The word used for “call” in Greek here is the technical word for inviting a guest to a house or to a meal.

Jesus called Mathew and he calls all of us today to the feast of the kingdom.

Saint of the day, July 1 - St. Junipero Serra and 16 other saints are remembered this day.

Saint Junipero Serra was born Miguel José Serra Ferrer in the village of Petra on the island of Mallorca in the Balearic Islands off the Mediterranean coast of Spain. By age seven, Miguel was working in the fields with his parents, helping cultivate wheat and beans, and tending the cattle. At age 16, Miguel's parents enrolled him in a Franciscan school in the capital city, Palma de Majorca, where he studied philosophy. A year later, he became a novice in the Franciscan order. He was given the religious name of Junípero in honor of Brother Juniper, who had been among the first Franciscans and a companion of Francis of Assisi. He immersed himself in rigorous studies of logic, metaphysics, cosmology, and theology. In 1737, he became a priest, and three years later earned an ecclesiastical license to teach philosophy at the Convento de San Francisco.

At the age of 35, he left his prestigious teaching profession and chose to become a missionary to spread the Gospel in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. In 1750 he left Europe and began establishing Catholic missions in Central Mexico and the Baja Peninsula. From 1769 to 1792, he traveled north through Spanish Colonial California and founded missions in San Diego, Monterey/Carmel, San Gabriel, San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara, and San Buenaventura.

He brought the Gospel to the native peoples, baptizing over 6,000 and confirming 5,000. Fr. Serra also taught them methods of making a living in agriculture, cattle raising, and arts and crafts. Many of the native people died due to disease and harsh treatment by the Spaniards, including overwork, torture, and daily beatings. In Mexico City, Fr. Serra pleaded for and obtained protections for the native people and the missions. This protection was the basis for the first significant legislation in California, a "Bill of Rights" for Native Americans.

Fr. Serra was frequently cold and hungry, faced unsympathetic military commanders, and was in danger of death from non-Christian natives. His zeal for the Lord, however, was strong, and he persevered through prayer. Fr. Serra died in 1784, was beatified in 1988 and canonized by Pope Francis on September 23, 2015.

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