

MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, Sixteenth Week in Ordinary Time

**Be comfortable with not knowing and be open to mystery
and you will find peace and serenity.**

Jeremiah 3:14-17

Jerusalem was destroyed and the Ark of the Covenant had disappeared. Jeremiah calls the “rebellious children” of God to return to the Lord. He says, God will appoint shepherds after his “own heart”, who will shepherd them “wisely and prudently”. He says Jerusalem will once again become the center and the glory of Israel.

Be prudent and wise in all your relationships and activities!

Jeremiah 31

**Hear the word of the Lord, O Nations,
Proclaim it on distant coasts and say:
He, who scattered Israel, now gathers them together,
He guards them as a shepherd his flock.**

Mathew 13:18-23

Jesus spoke the parable of the sower. Seeds fall into all kinds of soil...only those that fall into good soil has the opportunity to sprout and grow and yield a rich harvest. Knowing that the seeds will fall into different types of soil, even into rocky and thorny ground with little chance of growing to fruitfulness, the good and diligent and faithful farmer keeps sowing, trusting in the possibility of a good harvest.

Sower must keep sowing...Seeds keep sprouting...Earth keeps nurturing...Harvest is sure to happen.

Those who have the WORD must speak.....Those who hear must welcome the WORD
The WORD must become flesh...

Keep listening.... Keep speaking.... Keep nurturing.... Be patient.....Harvest will happen.

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

Youssef Antoun Makhoul was born on May 8, 1828. They lived in the village of Bekaa Kafa, 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.

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