

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Twenty Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

**God has supplied all my needs and has not failed me once
and he will never fail me because his love is steadfast.**

I Timothy 6:13-16

Paul instructed Timothy to be faithful, to bear witness to Christ and to give honor and glory to God just as Christ gave honor and glory to God.

Psalm 100

**Serve the Lord with gladness,
Come before him with joyful songs
Know that he the Lord is God;
He made us, his we are;
His people, the flock he tends.....**

Luke 8:4-15

Jesus told his listeners 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 way side or among thorns or on rocky ground and may become unproductive. But he knows that some will fall on good soil and will yield.

The farmer 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. Just be faithful!

Saint of the Day, September 23 - St. Pio of Pietrelcina and 14 other saints are remembered this day

Francesco Forgione was born on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, a town in the province of Benevento, in the Southern Italian region of Campania. His parents were peasant farmers. He worked on the land up to the age of 10, looking after the small flock of sheep the family owned. At the age of 15, Francesco joined the Capuchins and took the name of Pio. He was ordained a priest in 1910 and was drafted during World War I. After he was discovered to have tuberculosis, he was discharged. In 1917, he was assigned to the friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, 75 miles from the city of Bari on the Adriatic.

On September 20, 1918, as he was making his thanksgiving after Mass, Padre Pio had a vision of Jesus. When the vision ended, he had the stigmata in his hands, feet, and side. Life became more complicated after that. Medical doctors, Church authorities, and curiosity seekers came to see Padre Pio. In 1924, and again in 1931, the authenticity of the stigmata was questioned; Padre Pio was not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to hear confessions. He did not complain of these decisions, which were soon reversed.

Padre Pio rarely left the friary after he received the stigmata, but busloads of people soon began coming to see him. Each morning after a 5 a.m. Mass in a crowded church, he heard confessions until noon. He took a mid-morning break to bless the sick and all who came to see him. Every afternoon he also heard confessions. In time his confessional ministry would take 10 hours a day; penitents had to take a number so that the situation could be handled. Many of them have said that Padre Pio knew details of their lives that they had never mentioned.

Padre Pio saw Jesus in all the sick and suffering. At his urging, a fine hospital was built on nearby Mount Gargano. The idea arose in 1940; a committee began to collect money. Ground was broken in 1946. Building the hospital was a technical wonder because of the difficulty of getting water there and of hauling up the building supplies. This "House for the Alleviation of Suffering" has 350 beds.

One of Padre Pio's sufferings was that unscrupulous people several times circulated prophecies that they claimed originated from him. He never made prophecies about world events and never gave an opinion on matters that he felt belonged to Church authorities to decide. He died on September 23, 1968 and was canonized on June 16, 2002 by Pope John Paul II

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