

MORNING MEDITATION

Wednesday, Second Week in Ordinary Time

**Boredom is the feeling that everything is a waste of time;
serenity, that nothing is.**

1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51

This excerpt describes David's character as a man of deep personal faith in God. "The Lord, who delivered me from the claws of the lion and the bear, will also keep me safe from the clutches of this philistine. Saul blessed him and sent him to fight the philistines. David struck Goliath down with his sling and the philistines took this as sign of God's protection of Israel.

Trust in the Lord's abiding, protecting and guiding presence in your life. May the Lord keep you safe in the circle of his love!

Psalm 144

**Blessed be the Lord my rock,
Who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war.
My refuge and my fortress,
My stronghold, my deliverer....**

Mark 3:1-6

Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on a Sabbath while the Pharisees kept a careful watch over Jesus to trap him with anything that could be used against him.

Jesus gave the man with the withered hand his health, his dignity, his self-respect, and work for his living. Sabbath was not a barrier for Jesus to restore someone's dignity and worth, to heal and bring wholeness.

To the Pharisee, religion was ritual; it meant obeying certain rules and regulations. One could be very religious without being sensitive to human needs, blind to the tears of the world around.

To Jesus, religion had to find its way into service, into the care of human beings. Religion was love of God and of people in life, in practice.

To Jesus, the most important thing was not correct performance of rituals, but spontaneous response to human needs. Ritual was irrelevant compared with love in action.

There is no time so sacred that it cannot be used for helping people in need.

Saint of the Day, January 21 - St. Agnes and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

We have very little knowledge of Agnes with historical accuracy. Much of what we know is tradition as well as legend. According to tradition, Agnes was a member of the Roman nobility, born around 291 and raised in an early Christian family. She suffered martyrdom at the age of twelve or thirteen during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, on January 21, 304.

She was a beautiful young girl from a wealthy family. She had many suitors of high rank, and the young men, slighted by her resolute devotion to religious purity, submitted her name to the authorities as a follower of Christianity. The Prefect condemned Agnes to be dragged naked through the streets to a brothel. Legend tells us that all men who attempted to rape her were immediately struck blind. The son of the prefect was struck dead but revived after she prayed for him, causing her release. She was later sentenced to death, led out and bound to a stake, but the bundle of wood would not burn, or the flames parted away from her. The officer in charge of the troops drew his sword and beheaded her.

Saint Agnes is also known as Agnes of Rome, Ines, Ines del Campo, and Ynez. The name "Agnes" is similar to the Latin word agnus, which means "lamb". For this reason depictions of Saint Agnes often include a lamb. The name actually comes from a Greek word which means "chaste, pure, sacred".

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