

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**The world changes - circumstances change, and we change,
but God's Word never changes. His word is steadfast.**

Genesis 1:20-2:4

We continue to read the story of creation. God said: “be fertile and multiply and let the earth bring forth all kinds of living beings!”

God blessed everything with the power to give life!

God created man – male and female, blessed them saying, “Be fertile and multiply”. God blessed man, male and female with the power to give life!

God blessed man, male and female with power to govern everything that lives and moves! To govern means to take charge, tenderly care, to see to the total wellbeing of those in your care.

Psalm 8

**When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers,
The moon and the stars which you set in place;
What is man that you should be mindful of him,
or the son of man that you should care for him?**

Mark 7:1-13

For their guidance of life, the Pharisees and experts of the law did not depend on listening to God - they depended on clever arguments and debates and ingenious interpretations of legal experts.

Such cleverness can never be the basis of true religion. True religion can never be the product of man’s mind. True religion must come, not from man’s ingenious discoveries, but from the simple and humble listening to and acceptance of the voice of God.

Never allow rules to paralyze the claim of love.

Saint of the Day, February 7 - Pope Pius IX and 20 other saints are remembered this day.

Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti was born on May 13, 1792 in Senigallia, Italy. He was the ninth child born into the noble family of Girolamo dei conti Ferretti and was baptized on the same day of his birth with the name of Giovanni Maria Battista Pietro Pellegrino Isidoro. He was educated at the Piarist College in Volterra and in Rome. As a young man, he was engaged to be married to an Irishwoman, Miss Foster (the daughter of the Bishop of Kilmore), and arrangements were made for the wedding. His parents opposed the marriage and he did not appear at the church on the appointed day.

As a theology student in his hometown Sinigaglia in 1814, he met Pope Pius VII, who had returned from French captivity. In 1815, he entered the Papal Noble Guard but was soon dismissed after an epileptic seizure. He threw himself at the feet of Pius VII, who elevated him and supported his continued theological studies. He was ordained a priest on April 10, 1819. He initially worked as the rector of the Tata Giovanni Institute in Rome. Shortly before his death, Pius VII sent him as Auditor to Chile and Peru in 1823 and 1825 to assist the Apostolic Nuncio. When he returned to Rome, the successor of Pius VII, Pope Leo XII appointed him head of the hospital of San Michele in Rome (1825–1827) and canon of Santa Maria in Via Lata.

Pope Leo XII appointed him Archbishop of Spoleto in 1827 at the age of 35 and cardinal in 1839. His episcopal priorities were the formation of priests through improved education and charities. He became known for visiting prisoners in jail, and for programs for street children. He was chosen the 255th pope in the conclave of 1846.

He was the last pope to hold temporal power, that is, to rule a secular state. His election raised the hopes of patriotic and liberal circles of Catholics. One of his first acts was an amnesty for all political prisoners. He defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 8, 1854. Celebrated the First Vatican Council from 1869 to 1870, which was interrupted by the Franco-Prussian War. This council defined the dogma of papal infallibility. He supported several reforms in the Papal States. He created 123 cardinals. Gained a reputation for being a patriotic, and reforming Pope.

He died on February 7, 1878 in Vatican City of natural causes. Pius IX's cause for beatification was one of the longest and most difficult in Church history. Begun under Pius X on February 11, 1907, re-launched by Benedict XV without much success, later by Pius XI, and then by Pius XII on December 7, 1954. The decree on the heroic exercise of theological and cardinal virtues was finally promulgated by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on July 6, 1985, allowing his proclamation as Venerable. Among Pius IX's most outstanding virtues were his unconditional love for the Church, his charity, and his high regard for the priesthood and for missionaries.

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