

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Twenty Second Sunday of the Year

**When you lose serenity within, you lose touch with yourself
and the world around you.**

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Jeremiah had the mission of proclaiming something that his people did not want to hear, “repent and turn to your God”. He didn’t want the job, he protested that he was young, and he accepted his calling, reluctantly. Once accepted, he remained faithful to his calling. He wouldn’t give up in spite of rejection of his people, even of his friends.

In this excerpt, we read about Jeremiah crying out his frustration. His enemies seemed more powerful than ever and he found himself in a helpless situation. He cursed even the day of his birth: “the word of the Lord has brought me derision and reproach all day”. With all the disappointments and frustrations, he surrendered to God: “I say to myself, I will speak his name no more...then it becomes like fire burning in my heart...I must speak”.

Get in touch with the spark in your heart and fan it into flame.

Psalms 63

Imagine the Greeks thirsting for “Zeus” or the Canaanites thirsting for “Baal” or the Babylonians for “Nebo” or the Hindus thirsting for “Kali” or any other blood thirsty god!!! Our poet thirsts...his whole being thirsts for God, the living God and not huge, monstrous, fierce gods whom men have to carry on their shoulders. The Psalmist has known the living God who carries his people in His arms. What an amazing discovery!

Our Psalmist has found the “loving kindness”, “steadfast love” or “covenant love” better than life itself! The “love” of God is better than the gift of life itself!!! So, lips will praise and hands will bless.... the whole being will bless God. So, he praises, meditates, contemplates “God” day and night.

Remembering “Covenant love” he can only shout for joy. In the middle of the night, in deep darkness, sleeping in a mud hut with the domestic animals around....when all kinds of demons could be lurking around, our poet says, “my soul clings to thee and thy right hands upholds me” –what an affirmation of faith.

**O God, You are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts,
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.**

Romans 12:1-2

Paul has been proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus, the gift of God's Grace. In this chapter, he begins to open for his readers the ways of responding to this grace of God. The way we live as Christians is our response to what God has done for us in Christ. He invites his readers to offer themselves as "living sacrifice". Christians can not conform to the world. They must be transformed in Christ.....become living sacrifices of praise in all they do.

Mathew 16:21-27

Jesus and Peter defined each other and affirmed each other in lasting relationship. Peter had affirmed Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus had affirmed Peter as the "rock" on which he would build the Church. (Mt. 16:13-20)

Jesus also affirmed that this confession and commitment were not born of reason or logic but of Grace... "flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my heavenly father...."

Peter's confession is affirmed and proclaimed as a gift of Grace. (Mt. 16:13-20)

In this excerpt, Jesus points out that those of us who confess and commit ourselves to him must learn to live in conflict and tension.... that the Father will gift us with the power to live out our commitment... "the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail..."

Jesus taught the disciples to accept the suffering and the hardship that come with following his way. Salvation and peace will be brought through suffering, death and the cross and not through avenging armies.

Peter could neither understand nor accept this type of Messiahship: "God forbid that such things would happen...." Jesus called Peter an adversary and challenged him to follow rather than get in the way. Peter had to learn a new lesson, and we have to learn the same lesson today: You are either in the way or on the way...it is your choice. He had to learn to give up his own ideas and surrender to God's way, God's plan and God's will. We must be willing to accept the cost of being disciples of Jesus.

Saint of the Day, August 30 - St. Jeanne Jugan and 21 other saints are remembered this day

Jeanne Jugan was born October 25, 1792, in the port city of Cancale in Brittany. She

grew up during the political and religious upheavals of the French Revolution. Four years after she was born, her father, a fisherman, was lost at sea. Her mother struggled to provide for the young Jeanne and her siblings, while also providing them secretly with religious instruction amid the anti-Catholic persecutions of the day.

Jeanne Jugan worked as a shepherdess while still very young and learned to knit and spin wool. She could barely read and write. At the age of 16, Jeanne became a kitchen maid for a family that not only cared for its own members, but also served poor, elderly people nearby. At age 18, and again six years later, she declined marriage proposals from the same man. She told her mother that God had other plans and was calling her to “a work which is not yet founded”. At age 25, the young woman became an Associate of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary founded by St. John Eudes (Eudists).

After six years she became a servant and friend of a woman she met through the third order. They prayed, visited the poor, and taught catechism to children. After her friend’s death, Jeanne and two other women continued a similar life in the city of Saint-Severan. In 1839, they brought in their first permanent guest. They began an association, received more members, and more guests. Mère Marie of the Cross, as Jeanne was now known, founded six more houses for the elderly by the end of 1849, all staffed by members of her association, the Little Sisters of the Poor. By 1853, the association numbered 500 and had houses as far away as England.

At the time Pope Leo XIII gave her final approval to the community’s constitutions in 1879, there were 2,400 Little Sisters of the Poor. Jeanne died later that same year, on August 30, 1879, and was canonized in 2009.

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