

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**If you're struggling with guilt or fear, or just feeling like God is far away or doesn't care, meditate on God's steadfast love.
Praise Him because He always loves you!**

Genesis 3:9-24

In the garden, man enjoyed an intimacy with God which was destroyed by disobedience. Ashamed and afraid man and woman hid themselves from God. This excerpt tells us that through disobedience sin entered the world, and as a result, man and woman experienced separation, suffering, and ultimately death. Man and woman failed to be faithful to what God made them to be. Sin is a violation of what God made us to be.

Be faithful to what God made you to be.

Psalm 90

**Before the mountains were begotten,
And the earth and world were brought forth,
From everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

Mark 8:1-10

Jesus continued to care for those who followed him. In this excerpt, Mark tells us that he fed four thousand people with seven loaves of bread and two fish. The hungry people were filled and satisfied, and an abundance left over from the little they had.

Be compassionate. Let your compassion reach out and touch people where they really hurt, where it really matters.

One of the most amazing things about Jesus is his sensitivity to basic human needs. His mission was to proclaim the Kingdom of God. He had a "Gospel" to proclaim. In the midst of fulfilling his urgent mission, he became aware of the very basic human need, which in this case was hunger and attending to this need became an integral part of proclaiming the reign of God.

May caring for the poor and the hungry become part of your lifestyle!

The disciples had problems in feeding the hungry....they saw down-to-earth practical problem in a deserted place. Jesus challenged them to rely on the available resources

and do the best with what is available rather than think or worry about what is not there.

Help where help is needed with what you have, even when it doesn't seem adequate.

Saint of the Day, February 11 - Our Lady of Lourdes and 8 other saints are remembered this day.

On February 11, 1858, Mary appeared to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous. This was the first of 18 visits. When Bernadette asked the Lady's identity, she replied, "I am the Immaculate Conception." On December 8, 1854, just four years earlier, Pope Pius IX had proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in the apostolic constitution "Ineffabilis Deus." The Blessed Virgin, through Bernadette, had come to call sinners to a change of heart. Her message was a request for prayer and penance. She also instructed Bernadette to tell the priests that a chapel was to be built on the site and processions held.

Bernadette was a sickly child of poor parents. Their practice of the Catholic faith was scarcely more than lukewarm. Bernadette could pray the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed. She also knew the prayer of the Miraculous Medal: "O Mary conceived without sin."

During interrogations Bernadette gave an account of what she saw. It was "something white in the shape of a girl." It was "a pretty young girl with a rosary over her arm." Her white robe was encircled by a blue girdle. She wore a white veil. There was a yellow rose on each foot. A rosary was in her hand. Bernadette was also impressed by the fact that the lady did not use the informal form of address (tu), but the polite form (vous). The humble virgin appeared to a humble girl and treated her with dignity.

Through that humble girl, Mary revitalized and continues to revitalize the faith of millions of people. People began to flock to Lourdes from other parts of France and from all over the world. In 1862 Church authorities confirmed the authenticity of the apparitions and authorized the devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes. The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes became worldwide in 1907.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs