

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Fifth Week of Easter

**Every breath we take, every step we make,
can be filled with peace, joy and serenity.
(Thich Nhat Hanh)**

Acts 16:1-10

Paul made a long missionary journey with great success. He took Timothy along as a companion. Paul has a special gift of welcoming good men from the community to accompany him on his missionary journey. He was a good pastor, recognizing and affirming the goodness and generosity of faithful people in the community and calling them to share their gifts with others.

The Church continued to grow and become stronger in faith in spite of many hardships. Paul continued to discern and respond to the movement of the Holy Spirit and proclaimed the good news in many new towns and territories.

Psalm 100

**Sing joyfully to the Lord all you lands;
Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before him with joyful song.**

John 15:18-21

Jesus warned his disciples that they cannot conform to the world's standards and they would be hated for not conforming to the ways of the world. He told them that they did not belong to the world and that the world would not recognize them because they live a different standard and have a different lifestyle.

The price of non-conformity is alienation. Christians throughout the centuries have experienced alienation from the world in many different ways. In fact, anyone, who chooses a different lifestyle from that of the world, at any particular time, is disliked, alienated, even hated and persecuted for it. Socrates was killed just because he challenged men to think and reason and come to certain logical conclusions for themselves.

It is dangerous to be different. The disciples of Jesus must choose to be different, think different, see different, live different and even die different. This is the challenge that Jesus offered his disciples.

Saint of the Day, May 9 - St. John of Avila and 12 other saints are remembered this day.

John was born in Almodóvar del Campo, Ciudad Real, Spain to a wealthy and pious couple on January 6, 1499. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to the University of Salamanca to study law. He later moved to Alcala, where he studied philosophy and theology before his ordination as a diocesan priest. Both his parents died while he was still a student, and after his ordination, he celebrated his first Mass in the church where they were buried. He then sold the family property and gave the proceeds to the poor.

In 1527, he traveled to Seville, hoping to become a missionary in Mexico. While waiting in Seville, his unusually great devotion in celebrating Mass, and his skills in catechesis and preaching, attracted the attention of the Archbishop of Seville. The archbishop saw in the young cleric a powerful instrument to stir up the faith in Andalusia, and after considerable persuasion John was persuaded to abandon his journey to Mexico. During nine years of work there, he developed a reputation as an eloquent preacher, a spiritual director, and a wise confessor.

He was friends with Saints Francis Borgia, Ignatius of Loyola, John of God, John of the Cross, Peter of Alcantara, and Teresa of Avila. John of Avila worked closely with members of the Society of Jesus and helped their growth within Spain and its colonies. John's mystical writings have been translated into several languages. John died on May 10, 1569 in Córdoba, Spain. He was canonized in 1970, and declared a doctor of the Church on October 7, 2012.

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