

MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Want serenity? Accept this moment...this is a God-moment!

1 Kings 11:29-32; 12:19

Jeroboam left Jerusalem. Ahijah, the prophet demonstrated to him how the kingdom will be divided and only one tribe will remain with the sons of Solomon by cutting up his cloak into twelve pieces. The ten pieces represented the then northern tribes of Israel. All of these are seen as the consequence of Solomon's unwise choices and unholy practices. Remember Solomon was the wisest of men and he was faithful to God and God's law.

Psalm 81

**There shall be no strange gods among you,
Nor shall you worship any alien god.
I, the Lord, am your God,
Who led you forth from the land of Egypt.**

Mark 7:31-37

Some people brought a deaf man with a speech impediment to Jesus for healing. Jesus put his finger into the man's ears and spitting, touched his tongue and said, "Be opened". The man listened and he spoke! Jesus took the man aside. Deaf folks are always a little embarrassed and when someone shouts at them, they become more embarrassed. Jesus tenderly cared for the man for whom life was difficult and healed him. **May your touch be comforting and healing! Be sensitive to those who are vulnerable!**

For Jesus this was not another case. He was a person and this person was in need. The man had a special need and he needed special attention and he was given special consideration. Jesus treated him with compassion. **Be compassionate in your relationships! Be considerate and tenderly care for those in need!**

The people said, "he has done everything well". **Do everything well. Give everything your best!**

Saint of the Day, February 13 - St. Catherine del Ricci and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Catherine was born Alessandra Lucrezia Romola de' Ricci in Florence in 1522. Her baptismal name was Alexandrina, but she took the name of Catherine upon entering religious life. From her early childhood, she manifested a great love of prayer. At age 6 or 7, her father enrolled her in a school run by a monastery of Benedictine nuns, near their home, where her aunt, Luisa de' Ricci, was the abbess. There she developed a lifelong devotion to the Passion of Christ.

After a brief return home, she entered the convent of the Dominican nuns at Prat in Tuscany, in her fourteenth year. In May 1535 she received the religious habit from her uncle, Friar Timoteo de' Ricci, O.P., who was confessor to the convent, and the religious name of Catherine, after the Dominican tertiary, Catherine of Siena.

Her novitiate was a time of trial. She would experience ecstasies during her routine, which caused her to seem asleep during community prayer services, dropping plates and food, so much so that the community began to question her competence, if not her sanity. Eventually the other Sisters became aware of the spiritual basis for her behavior.

While very young, she was chosen Mistress of Novices, then subprioress, and at twenty-five years of age she became perpetual prioress. As the prioress, she was an effective and greatly admired administrator. She was an advisor on various topics to princes, bishops and cardinals. She corresponded with three figures who were destined to become popes: Pope Marcellus II, Pope Clement VIII, and Pope Leo XI. An expert on religion, management and administration, her advice was widely sought. She gave counsel both in person and through exchanging letters. It is reported that she was extremely effective and efficient in her work, managing her priorities very well. She also was an ascetic, engaged in extreme fasting and other forms of penance and sacrifice. She died in 1590 after a prolonged illness.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs