

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

**Movement is good for the body. Stillness is good for the mind.
Serenity is good for the spirit.**

1 Kings 12:26-32; 13:33-34

Jeroboam built altars to false gods and established feasts in their honor in an effort to maintain control over the people. He was afraid of the people shifting their loyalty to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Jeroboam's unfaithfulness to the heritage, to the faith tradition of his ancestors led to his own ruin and that of his people.

Be faithful to your heritage of faith, to the roots of your spirituality.

Psalm 106

**We have sinned, we and our fathers;
we have committed crimes; we have done wrong.
Our fathers in Egypt,
considered not your wonders.....**

Mark 8:1-10

Jesus continued to care for those who followed him. His compassion reached not only to the spiritual and mental healing, but also to the physical hunger of people. 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 14 - Sts. Cyril & Methodius and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

The two brothers were born in Thessalonica. Cyril was born around 827 and Methodius around 815. Cyril was the youngest of seven brothers. He was born Constantine but was given the name Cyril upon becoming a monk in Rome shortly before his death. Methodius was born Michael and was given the name Methodius upon becoming a monk.

They lost their father when Cyril was fourteen, and one of the powerful ministers of the Empire, became their protector. This minister was also responsible for initiating a far-reaching educational program within the Empire which culminated in the establishment of the University of Magnaura, where Cyril was to teach. Cyril was ordained as priest sometime after his education, while his brother Methodius remained a deacon until 867/868.

Because their father was an officer in a part of Greece inhabited by many Slavs, these two Greek brothers ultimately became missionaries, teachers, and patrons of the Slavic peoples. After a brilliant course of studies, Cyril refused the governorship of a district such as his brother had accepted among the Slavic-speaking population. Cyril withdrew to a monastery where his brother Methodius had become a monk after some years in a governmental post.

A decisive change in their lives occurred when the Duke of Moravia asked the Eastern Emperor Michael for political independence from German rule and ecclesiastical autonomy (having their own clergy and liturgy). Cyril and Methodius undertook the missionary task. Cyril's first work was to invent an alphabet, still used in some Eastern liturgies. His followers probably formed the Cyrillic alphabet. Together they translated the Gospels, the psalter, Paul's letters and the liturgical books into Slavonic, and composed a Slavonic liturgy.

That and their free use of the vernacular in preaching led to opposition from the German clergy. The bishop refused to consecrate Slavic bishops and priests, and Cyril was forced to appeal to Rome. On the visit to Rome, he and Methodius had the joy of

seeing their new liturgy approved by Pope Adrian II. Cyril died in Rome 50 days after taking the monastic habit.

Methodius continued mission work for 16 more years. He was papal legate for all the Slavic peoples and consecrated a bishop. When much of their former territory was removed from their jurisdiction, the Bavarian bishops retaliated with a violent storm of accusation against Methodius. As a result, Emperor Louis exiled Methodius for three years. Pope John VIII secured his release.

Because the Frankish clergy continued their accusations, Methodius had to go to Rome to defend himself against charges of heresy and uphold his use of the Slavonic liturgy. He was again vindicated. Legend has it that in a feverish period of activity, Methodius translated the whole Bible into Slavonic in eight months. He died on Tuesday of Holy Week, surrounded by his disciples, in his cathedral church.

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