

MORNING MEDITATION

Saturday, Fifth Week of Easter

**The most important thing is that you are doing something
that you believe in and that you are passionate about.**

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.

Psalms 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 can not 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 life-style.....

The price of non-conformity is alienation. Christians throughout the centuries have experienced alienation from the world in many different ways. In fact, any one, who chooses a different life-style 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 24 - Feast of Mary Help of Christians and 16 other saints are remembered this day.

Saint John Chrysostom was the first person to use this Marian title in the year 345 as a devotion to the Virgin Mary. In 1572, during the expansion of the Islamic Ottoman Empire intended to invade Christian Europe, Pope Pius V invoked Christian armies and its victory achieved was consequently attributed to the intercession of Mary under this title.

Saint Don Bosco and Saint Vincent Pallotti also promoted Marian devotion under this title. Don Bosco built a huge basilica in her honor in 1868 and founded a religious congregation for women, under the title of, "The Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians". The title of Mary Help of Christians is associated with the defense of Christian Europe, the north of Africa and the Middle East from non-Christian peoples during the Middle Ages.

The feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians as we have it today, was instituted by Pope Pius VII. When Napoleon returned to Paris and Murat became king of Naples in March 1815, Pope Pius VII fled to Savona. After the Congress of Vienna and the battle of Waterloo, the pope returned to Rome in July 1815. To give thanks to God and Our Lady, he declared May 24, the anniversary of his return to be henceforth the feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians.

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