

# **MORNINGMEDITATION**

**Wednesday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Within you, there is a stillness and a sanctuary to which you can retreat  
at any time and be yourself.**

**(Hermann Hesse)**

## **Amos 5:14-15, 21-24**

Amos reminded his people that they were privileged to be God's people and that they should be faithful to that calling. He challenged them to live noble lives: "seek good and not evil that you may live", he said. He said to them that what the Lord seeks is goodness and truth and justice and not holocausts and sacrifices.

**Prayerfully discern what God wants of you and be faithful. This is better than any holocaust or sacrifice.**

## **Psalm 50**

**Offer to God praise as your sacrifice  
And fulfill your vows to the Most High;  
The call upon me in time of distress;  
I will rescue you and you shall glorify me.**

## **Mathew 8:28-34**

Encounter with Jesus brings freedom to two men who were demon-possessed. Encounter with Jesus is always a freeing experience. The place of demons is with the swine - not with people.

Two men and their neighbors, who were convinced that they were under oppression of demons, encountered a greater power - a power that does not oppress, but frees. The power of God, the power of Grace, the power of love is always freeing - never oppressive. The value of two men cannot be compared with the value of a herd of swine. But people did compare. It did not matter that two people regained their good senses - all that mattered was that their pigs perished. So, they were afraid - they had "some-thing" to lose and that "some-thing" was more important than the loss of people.

**Stay focused on higher values. Helping people should become more important than profit or gain.**

## **Saint of the Day, July 1 - St. Junipero Serra and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

Saint Junipero Serra was born Miguel José Serra Ferrer in the village of Petra on the island of Mallorca in the Balearic Islands off the Mediterranean coast of Spain. By age seven, Miguel was working in the fields with his parents, helping cultivate wheat and beans, and tending the cattle. At age 16, Miguel's parents enrolled him in a Franciscan school in the capital city, Palma de Majorca, where he studied philosophy. A year later, he became a novice in the Franciscan order. He was given the religious name of Junípero in honor of Brother Juniper, who had been among the first Franciscans and a companion of Francis of Assisi. He immersed himself in rigorous studies of logic, metaphysics, cosmology, and theology. In 1737, he became a priest, and three years later earned an ecclesiastical license to teach philosophy at the Convento de San Francisco.

At the age of 35, he left his prestigious teaching profession and chose to become a missionary to spread the Gospel in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. In 1750 he left Europe and began establishing Catholic missions in Central Mexico and the Baja Peninsula. From 1769 to 1792, he traveled north through Spanish Colonial California and founded missions in San Diego, Monterey/Carmel, San Gabriel, San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara, and San Buenaventura.

He brought the Gospel to the native peoples, baptizing over 6,000 and confirming 5,000. Fr. Serra also taught them methods of making a living in agriculture, cattle raising, and arts and crafts. Many of the native people died due to disease and harsh treatment by the Spaniards, including overwork, torture, and daily beatings. In Mexico City, Fr. Serra pleaded for and obtained protections for the native people and the missions. This protection was the basis for the first significant legislation in California, a "Bill of Rights" for Native Americans.

Fr. Serra was frequently cold and hungry, faced unsympathetic military commanders, and was in danger of death from non-Christian natives. His zeal for the Lord, however, was strong, and he persevered through prayer. Fr. Serra died in 1784, was beatified in 1988 and canonized by Pope Francis on September 23, 2015.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs