

MORNING MEDITATION

Friday, First Week in Ordinary Time

Simplify your needs. Small needs lead to a large life.

1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22

The sons of Samuel were not as wise, diligent and spiritual as their father was. So the elders of Israel asked Samuel to appoint a king over them, as other nations around them had. Samuel did not appreciate this idea and did not approve. It is as though they were rejecting God himself because God is their true king. Samuel explained to them about all the problems they would have to face if they had a king. But the people insisted. Samuel prayed to God and finally discerned to give the people a king.

Be wise and prayerfully discern all your choices and decisions.

Psalm 89

**Happy the people who know the joyful shout;
In the light of your countenance, O Lord, they walk.
At your name they rejoice all the day,
And through your justice they are exalted.**

Mark 2:1-12

Four men went up the roof, carrying a paralyzed man on a mat, made a hole in the roof, let down the mat with the man in it in order to bring the paralyzed man to Jesus. **Nothing is an obstacle to men of faith and determination!**

Jesus affirmed the faith of those who reached out to him and healed the paralyzed man. **Think of the kind of paralysis, from which, you or someone else you know, need healing and pray about it.**

“Why do you harbor evil in your hearts?” Jesus asked. Well, think of harboring evil thoughts about others - may be not evil, but may be unkind, uncharitable, unloving, judgmental.....**Reflect on the need to think “well” of others - to bless others, to see good in others, to bring out the good from others!**

Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven”. **Isn’t that another way of saying, you are acceptable, you are welcome here, you are called to “wholeness”, you don’t have to stay in guilt and shame, you can be better!**

Saint of the Day, January 14 - Felix of Nola and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Felix was the elder son of Hermias, a Syrian centurion who had retired to Nola, Italy, around the year 250. After his father's death Felix sold off most of his property and possessions, gave the proceeds to the poor, and pursued a clerical vocation. Felix was ordained by Saint Maximus of Nola and became his assistant after ordination. When Maximus fled to the desert at the beginning of Decius' persecution of the Christians in 250, Felix was seized in his stead, imprisoned and tortured.

Tradition tells us that he was reputedly released from prison by an angel, who directed him to the ailing Maximus, whom he brought back to Nola. Even after Decius' death in 251, Felix was a hunted man but kept well-hidden until the persecution ended. When Maximus died, the people unanimously selected Felix as their Bishop, but he declined the honor in favor of Quintus, a senior priest. Felix spent the rest of his life on a small piece of land sharing what he had with the poor and died there on January 14.

Much of the little information we have about Felix came from the letters and poetry of Saint Paulinus of Nola, who served at a porter at the door of a church dedicated to Saint Felix, and who gathered information about him from churchmen and pilgrims. Though Felix died of natural causes, he is normally listed as a martyr because of the torture, imprisonment, and privations he experienced in the persecutions.

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