TAKE A MINUTE TO MEDITATE TODAY

MONDAY
On the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. In the synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!”

- Mark 1:21-24

In the Bible the word “holy” entails separation from the ordinary and profane, and implies a connection to God and the divine sphere. In fact, God is the Holy One par excellence. Persons, things and actions are holy by association with God as the Holy One. Holiness involves consecration and dedication to God, and separation from what is evil and improper. In calling Jesus “the Holy One of God” the demon recognizes that Jesus is more than a wise teacher or powerful leader. Rather, as the Holy One of God, Jesus reveals the person of God and will of God. Be associating with Jesus we can become holy and share in the divine life.

We in the 21st century can learn much about the difference that Jesus the Holy One can make in our lives from the letters of Paul and other early Christian writers. They show us the significance of God the Holy One, Jesus the Holy One of God, and the Holy Spirit in Christian life today.

- Fr. Daniel Harrington

TUESDAY
Give counsel, grant justice, make your shade like night at the height of noon; hide the outcasts, do not betray the fugitive; let the outcasts of Moab settle among you; be a refuge to them from the destroyer.

- Isaiah 16:3-4

Let them vie in giving one another honor. Let them patiently bear everyone’s weaknesses of body and behavior. Let them compete in obeying one another… Let them prefer nothing to Christ. May life lead us together to eternal life.

- Rule of Benedict

WEDNESDAY
Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked, nor walks in the way of sinners, nor sits in the company of the scorners. But delights in the law of the Lord and mediates on his law day and night.

- Psalms 1:1-2

The Chinese mystic and philosopher Lao-tzu understood the ego to be “a gift on loan to us by the universe.” What is on loan is not taken as a possession but as a temporary and care-filled and loving acceptance of something that connects us with others around, before, and after us. An ego on loan is at home in the cosmos rather differently than the one possessed as one’s own; it can leave itself behind and weave itself into larger webs. “Go out of yourself and let yourself go” is the medieval version of this kind of freedom.

To be able to walk away from the ego fortified in possessiveness means to recognize what has been given as something on loan. By no longer having to be purely individual, the ego participates communally in
the universe. The utterly unfathomable Tao, present before heaven and earth came to be, can be seen as
the mother of the world or as the mother of ten thousand beings. In this sense, Tao the impersonal deity,
has also a personal side. Lao-tzu, who came from a region of matriarchal culture, uses the image of the
mother but also speaks of the primordial father of all things. What is decisive is the relation to the
primordial ground of the universe, for it is this relation that creates a kind of ego-lessness in the
temporarily loaned ego.

There is a story about the great impressionist painter Claude Monet that throws light on this different
relation to the ego. On Monet’s eightieth birthday, a photographer from Paris visited him, wanting to take
pictures of him. But Monet said coolly, “Come back next spring and take pictures of my flowers in the
garden, they look more like me than I do.” A mystical answer! Becoming ego-less does not begin with
the superego’s demands or rituals of purification but in the amazing sharing of the one life that is in
everything.

- Dorothee Soelle

THURSDAY
The Holy Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the
Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groaning. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the
intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God’s will.

- Romans 8:26-27

What we benefited from the “Extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the Family,” was the synodal process,
which is not a parliamentary process but rather a protected space so that the Holy Spirit can work. Two
clear qualities are needed: courage to speak, and humility to listen. And that worked very well. There
are, indeed positions more inclined this way or that way, but in the pursuit of truth. You could ask me,
“Are there any that are completely obstinate in their positions?” Yes, there surely are. But that doesn’t
worry me. It’s a question of praying for the Holy Spirit to convert them, if there are such people. The
prevailing feeling was a brotherly one trying to find a way together to tackle the family’s pastoral issues.

- Pope Francis

FRIDAY
All were amazed and asked one another, “What is this? A new teaching with authority? He commands
even the unclean spirits and they obey him.” His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of
Galilee.

- Mark 1:27-28

Jesus is described as one who teaches and speaks “with authority.” Jesus is one who can even command
evil spirits to depart. Jesus comes with a clear vision and the courage to speak clearly and boldly.

Such characteristics are essential for any contemporary prophet who will speak to the world a message of
justice and peace. Such characteristics are essential if we are to apply effectively the social teaching of
the church to our contemporary world.

The clarity of our vision and how it applies to the world develops out of a real understanding of the
situation of the world and its people. Our church must be connected with the lives of real people,
especially those who are struggling or in need or economically poor. Otherwise, we cannot be prophetic
and speak with authority.
The power of our preaching must come out of a deep faith in a God who calls to work for justice, to ask questions and to speak up. Without the faith that calls us to ask questions, we cannot be prophetic and speak with authority.

In a certain sense, the power of our preaching and actions can perform an “exorcism” on the world, driving out the evils spirits of injustice, poverty, violence, and selfishness and inviting in the good spirits of justice, peace, community and economic well-being for all.

- Fr John Bucki

Fast from adding or taking away from the Scriptures. Seek God’s authority for all that you do from study of the Scriptures.  
http://www.bassfishing.org/thebiblespeaks/Articles/Authority/Jesus/respect.htm

**SATURDAY**
Whosoever fears God and keeps his commandments, is the servant of God. And in this service is not perfection, but the righteousness which leads to adoption. For this cause the prophets also and the apostles, the holy band whom, by the goodness of God the Father became prisoners in Christ Jesus. For Paul says, “Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle:” so that the written law works with us in a good servitude, until we are able to master every passion, and to become perfect in the good ministry of virtue through this apostolic state.

For if a man draws near to grace, then Jesus will say to him, “I will no longer call you servants, but I will call you my friends and my brothers: for all things that I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you,” for those who have drawn near, and have been taught by the Holy Spirit, have known themselves according to their intellectual substance. And in their knowledge of themselves they have cried out and said, “For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father:” that we may know what God has given us – “If we are sons, then are we heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with the saints.”

My dear brethren and joint heirs with the saints, not foreign to you are all the virtues, but they are yours, if you are not under guilt from this fleshly life, but are manifest before God. For the Spirit enters not the soul of one whose heart is defiled, nor the body that sins; a holy power it is, removed from all deceit.

Truly, my beloved, I write to you as to reasonable men, who have been able to know yourselves. For he who knows himself, knows God: and he who knows God, is worthy to worship him as is right.

- St. Anthony

**SUNDAY**
Work for six days, and rest on the seventh.  
**Exodus 23:12**

Be still, and know that I am God.  
**Psalms 46:10**