

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Nov 22nd 2013

“My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.”

In the gospel, Jesus is speaking of the temple, but it could be my house. Is my home a house of prayer? There certainly are thieves that I let in that take me down a very different road from one of prayer. I too often offer a litany of excuses instead of a litany of prayer. I'm too busy, too tired, too frustrated, too angry, too bored, too everything to pray. But all of those times are exactly when I should stop. Take a deep breath. And pray. I can say thanks for a life that is busy and fulfilled. I can ask for help when I become overwhelmed with work and commitments. I can ask God to help me deal with my frustration and to defuse my anger. I can take a minute to pray for someone else when I am feeling bored or restless. I can reach out to someone who needs an ear or a friendly hello.

I let those thieves of frustration, anger and irritation into my house of prayer. I am stealing from myself. I can also drive the thieves out. I can listen to Jesus' words and respond to him. I can be mindful of my heart and mind. I can be more like St. Cecilia, whose feast we celebrate today. A martyr of Rome, she was said to have had a song to the Lord in her heart when she married. She's the patroness of music and musicians. Music, too, can be a prayer to fill my house with joy. My prayer today is to make my house a house of prayer, to make my litany of excuses into a litany of thankfulness and gratitude.

Carol Zuegner