



Fr. Matt's Musings

July 13, 2018

Thirteen has a bad reputation, and I am not sure of its origins. Hotel elevators and public buildings avoid acknowledging a thirteenth floor. In horror movies, only very bad things happen on Friday the 13th, and usually after dark. Friday the thirteenth is thought to be an unlucky day. In my humble opinion, Monday the thirteenth seems more appropriate to avoid. Who wants to begin the work week with an unlucky number?

I cannot imagine how many times we broke our mother's back by stepping on the sidewalk cracks. We are to avoid black cats, try not to walk under a ladder and never even think of opening an umbrella indoors. These are all examples of bad luck.

However, thirteen has very positive moments as well. A baker's dozen is thirteen and how bad can it be to have an extra roll, cookie or cupcake! Harrison Ford and Patrick Stewart celebrate birthdays on July 13th, and the movie "Ghost" and Elvis Presley's hit "Hound Dog" were released on this date, thirty four years apart.

Reputations can be like that. Jesus had a growing reputation as a preacher and healer except in his own town where his friends and family took offense with him. Jesus had many encounters with people with reputations: prostitutes, tax collectors and sinners, and because he reached out to them and shared God's love with them, many of them came to believe.

Sometimes it is easier to believe someone's reputation, take it at face value, rather than try to come to know the individual and judge for ourselves. Salesian gentleness calls us to value, respect and affirm the image of God in each person and sometimes that requires the work of peeling through the outer layers to come to know and see the goodness of God that lies

within. Happy Friday the 13th. Let's celebrate it and give it a new reputation!

Live Jesus!

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