

## *Good News Daily*

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**April 15-21, 2018**

**Number 15**

### **Sunday, April 15**

1 John 2:7-17 *But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.* (v.11 NKJ)

What is the definition of “hating your brother”? I think it is despising or treating with disrespect, including ignoring the needs of another. Do I ever do that? Of course, the answer is “Yes.” I live in the city where street lights shine in every window, but I grew up in a rural area where night was indeed very dark. I don’t like that kind of darkness. I feel very unsafe. Jonah was in darkness. His story (or God’s story) is an example of “hating your brother.” Jonah ran from sharing God’s love with the people of Nineveh because he hated them. God’s love pursued Jonah and the people of Nineveh anyway.

To love as Jesus demonstrated love is impossible without the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, because I am often unaware of my own heart, I first have to be convicted of this hate. Consider a person or group that you avoid, judge, or diminish. What would it look like to love that person or group? Jesus taught us that love is a verb in the story of the Good Samaritan. What action will I take today to show love? Jesus, I need your love and power to act loving to everyone.

Exodus 18:1-12; Psalms 148, 149, 150; Mark 16:9-20

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* PRAY for The Church of Ireland The Most Revd Richard Lionel Clarke Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland and Metropolitan  
*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Trinity Episcopal Church, Mattoon, The Rev. Jeffrey Kozuszek, Priest in Charge; Nkulusi Parish, Tanzania: Rev. Andrea Anania; The Mission of St. Luke, Cerro Colorado, Arequipa, Peru, Rev'd Ricardo Vergara, Vicar; Rev'd Nestor Mogollon, Deacon.

### **Monday, April 16**

Exodus 18:13-27 *When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What are you really accomplishing here? Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?"* (v.14 NLT)

Moses was a powerful leader of God’s people and yet he still needed Jethro to ask him challenging questions. “So, what are you trying to accomplish here?” Moses responded to the challenge by allowing others to help with the necessary task of making decisions. What if I asked myself the same question? That question

helps me evaluate the effectiveness of my direction and activities. Am I following God's direction for my life or my own? Am I allowing others to assist me on my journey? The Holy Spirit responds, "I hear your very tired and discouraged heart. That is not my work in you but it is your Enemy who wants to kill, rob and destroy. Come to me with your weary heart and I will give you rest. I am the one who loves you!"

Furthermore, as a sister in Christ, it is my responsibility to call forth the gifts of others. What a wonderful celebration when we all use our gifts for the glory of God! Lord, please help us to make that a reality today.

Psalm 25; 1 Peter 5:1-14; Matthew 1:1-17, 3:1-6

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Carlisle - (York, England) The Rt Revd James Scobie Newcome, Carlisle - The Rt Revd Robert Freeman

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Birthday of The Rt. Rev. Donald M. Hultstrand, IX Bishop of Springfield, Greenville, SC.; Birthday of Karen, wife of The Rev. Michael J. Newago, Havana.

## **Tuesday, April 17**

Colossians 1:1-14 *This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God's wonderful grace. (v.6)*

I heard the Good News—that Jesus died to reconcile me to Father, that Jesus rose again so that I could live a new life free from sin, and that he will come again to take me home to live eternally. That news was planted like a seed in my heart and is even now growing fruit (love, peace, joy, patience, long-suffering, the character of Christ Jesus). And even more, it's free—no charge (grace).

I need the reminder of what "free" really means. I don't have to prove I am worthy by doing religious acts or working to accomplish things on my own. This life-changing power is actually going all over the world, building a mighty network to accomplish God's plans and purposes on this earth.

Know God's great unlimited love. It is a love that changes you from the inside out. And with the compassion and boldness to share it with others. Your life is hidden in Christ Jesus and his plans are perfect for you.

Exodus 19:1-16; Psalm 26, 28; Matthew 3:7-12

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Cashel & Ossory - (Dublin, Ireland) The Rt Revd Michael Andrew James Burrows

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Joy to thee, O Queen of Heaven. Alleluia! He whom Thou wast meet to bear. Alleluia! As He promised hath arisen. Alleluia!

*ST. MATTHEW'S:* Sue Jones' birthday.

### **Wednesday, April 18**

Matthew 3:13-17 *And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy." (v.17)*

This is the Father's declaration at Jesus' baptism. It is not difficult for me to see why Jesus would be dearly loved by his Father. After all, he's a perfect Son, right? But what about me (us) as His beloved children? We are far from perfect. When I make a mistake or willfully disobey God, I feel very unlovable. But He loves me still. When I am heart-sick from failure, He loves me still. When I disappoint everyone, including myself, He loves me still. When I choose to gossip, criticize, or use sarcasm at another's expense, He loves me still. Oh, this great love that wraps me and holds me tight! Appreciate it, sing about it, tell everyone about it.

Don't be separated from His great love any longer. Run to the lover of your soul. He cares for you, cherishes you, enjoys you, lifts you up when you fall, wraps you in His arms. Love Him, worship Him, call Him your Dad.

Exodus 19:16-25; Psalm 38; Colossians 1:15-23

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Central Buganda - (Uganda) The Rt Revd Michael Lubowa  
*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Church of the Redeemer, Cairo, admitted to the Diocese of Illinois, 1841.

### **Thursday, April 19**

Colossians 1:24—2:7 *Let your roots grow down deep into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. (v.7)*

Looking at the beautiful plants and trees in God's world helps me to understand this passage. All plants need a healthy root structure before they can thrive. (As I am writing this I've just returned from China. Check out the Three Gorges and observe the trees growing on those sheer cliffs.) God plants my roots deep in His Son so that I can stand strong when wind and rain assault me. Also, so that I can overflow with thankfulness for this sustaining root structure. This relationship with Jesus begins by receiving his great love for me. Just accepting it as a fact, no matter how I feel. It's a love that began before I had conscious thought so that I could never take credit for loving him first. He created my heart to long for that love and even not to be able to truly live without it.

Exodus 20:1-21; Psalm 37:1-18; Matthew 4:1-11

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* The Most Revd Thabo Makgoba Archbishop of Capetown and Primate of Southern Africa; Cape Town - Table Bay - The Rt Revd Garth Counsell

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* St. John's, Decatur, consecration of present church building, Birthday of The Rt. Rev. Anthony F.M. Clavier, Glen Carbon; Wedding Anniversary of The Rev. Beth H. Maynard and Mark Dirksen, Champaign.

### **Friday, April 20**

Psalm 105:1-22 *Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the LORD tested Joseph's character.* (v.19)

Consider all that Joseph's character-building tests involved. He was hated by his brothers, separated from those he loved, almost put to death, was wrongly accused, thrown into prison, and totally forgotten. In all that, he stayed faithful to God and continued to make right choices in the face of each challenge. Little did Joseph know that his dream would include saving his whole family from starvation. Often, I am thankful that God doesn't reveal His whole plan to me. That knowledge would be too overwhelming.

As Christians, those character-building situations should produce the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5). That peace, joy, patience, long-suffering, of course, is also the character of Christ. Am I able to make right choices and follow Jesus in every situation in my life? Only his Spirit working in me can make it possible to face life's challenges, allow him to change my heart, and come out the other side looking more like him.

Exodus 24:1-18; Colossians 2:8-23; Matthew 4:12-17

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Central Busoga - (Uganda) The Rt Revd Patrick Wakula

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia. For the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia.

*ST. MATTHEW'S:* Morgan Kimmerling's birthday.

### **Saturday, April 21**

Psalm 32 *The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."* (v.8 NLT)

To have the guidance and advice from the King of the Universe sounds like all I could hope for. What a wonderful promise! I believe that promise does not necessarily include long-range plans. Sometimes he just gives us the next step. That uncomfortable place teaches us faith and trust that God knows more than we do. Think back to our reading on Sunday of this week when God said if we hate we will not be able to see where we are going. Certainly, before I can claim that promise of guidance along best paths, I must stop hating and begin loving, even those that I find unlovable. Then I can walk in the light of Christ Jesus and receive guidance from the Holy Spirit.

"Count yourself lucky; how happy you must be—you get a fresh start, your slate's wiped clean. Count yourself lucky—God holds nothing against you and

you're holding nothing back from him. Celebrate God, sing together, everyone! All you honest hearts, raise the roof!" (Psalm 32:1-2, 11 *The Message*).

Exodus 25:1-22; Psalm 30; Colossians 3:1-17; Matthew 4:18-25

*ANGLICAN CYCLE*: Central Ecuador - (XI, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Victor Scantlebury

*DIOCESAN CYCLE*: Birthday of The Rev. Jon E. Griffin, West Frankfort; Birthday of Elizabeth, wife of The Rev. Canon David M. Baumann, Salem.

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*by Charlene Laird*

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*For the St. Matthew's Community, please remember the following in your prayers this week:*

**Pray for** the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Tim H. and family, Greg P., Linda S., Phyllis P., Bill J., Ron G., Bill, Bobbi, Matt, Tori B., Dave M., Bill Mc., Linda T., Dottie T., Roger H., Jack P., Zac & Alyssa & Carson C., Jenna A.

**Pray for** the Faithful Departed:

**Pray for** those living in nursing homes and other shut-ins: Dale B., Alicia P., Barb W., Daniel T., Ina R., and Margaret P.

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Tabora, Anglican Church of Tanzania, The Rt. Rev. Elias Chakupewa, the clergy and people. The Missionary Diocese of Peru, The Rt. Rev. Alejandro Mesco. Fr. Kari Marcelle, the clergy and people of Holy Trinity St. Vincent. Fr. Dave and all clergy, for whom we light the candle on the west side of the Altar