

Good News Daily

Volume XVIII

September 30-October 6, 2018

Number 39

Sunday, September 30

Matthew 13:44-52 *“The kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.”* (v.44 NJB)

I have a friend who keeps discovering parts of the kingdom in the here-and-now of his life. When he makes these discoveries, he’s very excited. He tells his friends at church all about the discovery: “This is life changing for me,” he enthuses.

Yet after a week or two, he seems to have forgotten all about his discovery. I’ve asked him about this a few times. He replies, “My schedule got too busy, and I couldn’t find the time,” or “I was overloaded at work, and was too tired to think about it.” My friend discovers parts of the kingdom, but he’s not yet ready to buy the field.

Sometimes, folks joyfully find the treasure, but discover the cost of buying the field includes giving up some aspect of our lives we’re not yet ready to part with. The Holy Spirit will keep revealing parts of the treasure of the kingdom to us. The good news is that God will provide, guide, and support us in finding our way to buying the field.

Hosea 2:2-14; Psalms 66, 67; James 3:1-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for The Church of the Province of Uganda The Most Revd Stanley Ntagali, Archbishop of Uganda & and Bishop of Kampala

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Michael's Episcopal Church, O'Fallon, the Very Rev. Ian C. Wetmore, Vicar; Tutuo Mission, Tanzania, Rev. Jonas Mkuyu, Vicar; The Mission of Santa Natividad, Yarabamba, Peru, Rev'd Victor Condori, Vicar.

ST. MATTHEWS: Roger Thomas' birthday.

Monday, October 1

Luke 5:1-11 *For he and all his companions were completely awestruck at the catch they had made.* (v.9)

In the last twenty years, my faith community has spent a tremendous amount of time and energy on the matter of church growth. We’ve read books about growing a congregation. We’ve attended workshops on church growth. We’ve created programs advised by “experts”. We’ve even hired a consultant or two. Yet, honestly, all our time and energy has had some good results, but not what we hoped.

It occurs to me that in all our efforts, we’ve never taken the time to pray intently (as a group) about where Jesus wants us to cast the net. I’m convinced that

if we took a weekend together praying, sharing, and fasting about the matter, Jesus would find a way to show us where and how to cast the net.

Like it or not, denominations and congregations are institutions. Institutions do institutional programs, proposed by institutional experts. I wonder what would happen if we did something radically Christian, and asked Jesus to show us the way. I believe we'd be awestruck by the results!

Hosea 2:14-23; Psalm 89:1-18; Acts 20:17-38

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Ife East - (Ibadan, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Oluseyi Oyelade

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Father of all, accept our thanks for the joys of family and life.

ST. MATTHEWS: Char Wald's birthday.

Tuesday, October 2

Luke 5:12-26 *Seeing their faith Jesus said, "My friend your sins are forgiven you."* (v.20)

At all worship services in our congregation, we pray aloud a list of people who've asked us to pray for healing for themselves, or someone else. The list is quite long. (Some people complain it takes "too much time".)

The people who ask for our prayers often have minimal connection with our congregation, but they know we'll pray for anyone who asks, for as long as the request remains. I often think about how this practice expands the size of our faith community. People we don't personally know, from places we've never heard of, become friends. Periodically, we get a report back about healing and grace-filled events in the life of one of our distant friends. What blessings!

In the Scripture verse above, Jesus validates that the faith of others can be a powerful force in the healing of a person who needs that healing.

In the midst of these public healing prayers, my mind often sees an image of the paralyzed man's friends lowering him through the roof to the healing Lord. Let's join them!

Hosea 4:1-10; Psalms 97, 99, 100; Acts 21:1-14

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Ifo - (Lagos, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Nathaniel Oladejo

Ogundipe

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Dr. Gregory A. Tournoux, Springfield.

ST. MATTHEWS: Julie Bennett's birthday.

Wednesday, October 3

Luke 5:27-39 *Jesus said to them in reply, "It is not those that are well who need the doctor, but the sick."* (v.31)

In the busy life of the church, I often find that in the midst of programs, planning groups, and worship services, it's often difficult to remember that we're a

group of people on a mission. My denomination enshrines that mission in this statement: “The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.” I wonder what would happen if we actually made this mission the first priority in our congregation? What if we actually spent the majority of our resources of time, energy, and money on undertaking that mission?

Many of us first came to Jesus Christ and his Body, the Church, seeking to be healed, forgiven, and given a new start in life. We all encounter people who are seeking to find something that can transform and give meaning to their lives. We have a personal witness to bear to them about the love and transforming power of God, in and through Jesus Christ. Our mission is to share that witness!

Hosea 4:11-19; Psalms 101, 109; Acts 21:15-26

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Igbomina - (Kwara, Nigeria) The Ven Emmanuel Adekola

DIOCESAN CYCLE: All Saints, Morton, Admitted to the Diocese, 1964; St. Christopher’s, Rantoul, Admitted to the Diocese, 1964; Birthday of The Rev. Ann Tofani, Mt. Carmel.

ST. MATTHEWS: Sue & Bill Owen’s wedding anniversary.

Thursday, October 4

Psalm 105:1-22 *Seek Yahweh and his strength, tirelessly seek his presence!* (v.4)

Recently, a friend of mine complained, “As the pace of my life speeds up, and the huge amount of information that comes my way each day increases, I often find myself feeling spiritually overwhelmed and emotionally drained. There are days I’m just too numb to think about God, or to pray.”

There are days I feel that way too! This leads me to some reflection about the matter. When I feel overwhelmed and drained, I find that I’m viewing my relationship with God and prayer as something to be engaged in when I have the time and energy. Yet, when I actually take the time for prayer and devotion in a hectic and information overloaded day, I don’t feel overwhelmed and drained, even though the pace of the day and the barrage of information are the same. Hmm!

Jesus promised us that when we are overburdened, overwhelmed or drained, we can come to him and be refreshed. He truly means it!

Hosea 5:8—6:6; Acts 21:27-36; Luke 6:1-11

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Igbomina - West - (Kwara, Nigeria) The Rt Revd James Akinola

DIOCESAN CYCLE: May God be merciful to us and bless us.

ST. MATTHEWS: Jeffrey Clark’s birthday.

Friday, October 5

Psalm 102 *He will turn to hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not treat their prayer with scorn.* (v.17)

For several years, I've joined other members of our congregation participating in a United Way Resource Day for homeless people in the Seattle area. Our ministry has been the washing of homeless people's feet. This includes caring for their wounded feet (due to spending many days without being able to remove their wet shoes and socks). It is a profound experience!

In the intimate exchange of holding and washing their feet, they open up to us about their experience of homelessness. They often talk about longing for a different future for themselves. In that sharing, which is truly prayer, I've come to realize I have more in common with them than I could have ever realized. I've also come to know these people are very special to God, in ways I could never have imagined.

Most of all, I've learned that it's actually the Risen Christ who is ministering to them through me, loving and not despising them! They have given me much more than I've given them.

Hosea 10:1-15; Acts 21:37—22:16; Luke 6:12-26

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Ijebu - (Lagos, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Ezekiel Awosoga

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Jesus Christ our Lord, draw us into the orbit of you whenever we become lost and are led astray.

ST. MATTHEWS: Charles Gordon's birthday.

Saturday, October 6

Luke 6:27-38 *"Instead, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked."* (v.35)

I admit that I have some difficulty not viewing people with whom I disagree as "enemies". As I overhear conversations, watch TV, read magazines and newspapers, I'm becoming more and more aware other people are having the same difficulty.

What bothers me most about this is I was a Marine in Vietnam, willing to kill and harm people I did not know. I've thought a great deal about this recently. What I've realized is I was willing to do this violence to others because I'd depersonalized the people I considered enemies. It troubles me that I see and hear myself and others doing that same depersonalizing here and now.

Jesus gives us a vision of reunion and reconciliation of all people. He asks us to live out that vision in everyday life. That doesn't mean we have to agree with everyone, or even to like them and their behavior. It does mean we are called to be kind and loving toward all people, not to depersonalize them into enemies. Tough stuff!

Hosea 11:1-9; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Acts 22:17-29

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Ijebu - North - (Lagos, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Solomon Kuponu

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted in a wonderful order the ministries of angels and mortals.

ST. MATTHEWS: Kelly Gray and Caroline Leighton's birthdays.

by John Fergusson

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Pray for the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Jenna A., Mary, James T., Julie C., Valerie R., Barbara A., Bill B., Ms. Shayne, Diane B., Steve J., Carol D.

Pray for the Faithful Departed:

Pray for those living in nursing homes and other shut-ins: Dale B., 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