

Good News Daily

Volume XIX

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Number 4

Sunday, January 27

John 5:2-18 “*Do you want to make yourself well? Stand up, take your mat and walk.*” (vv.6b, 8b NRSV)

Sometimes, it seems impossible to know which road to take. God seems a universe away. If I ask for direction, all I experience is silence... and guilt for having “such little faith.” The world feels lonely: an empty, uncaring place. If God has a plan for me, why does God seem to hide it like a cruel game of hide-and-go-seek? I drink from the bitter cup of anxious anger. Maybe God is simply not interested in being the control freak I so desperately want Him to be. What if God has already provided all I need, and is patiently waiting for me to live into the mystery of life? What if the success I crave and the failure I dread are irrelevant from God’s perspective? What if what is truly important is that I judiciously *stand up, take my mat and walk...* that I embrace the Gift of being fully human... fully alive... especially in desperate times... trusting “all shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well!”?

Isaiah 47:1-15; Psalms 63:1-11, 98; Hebrews 10:19-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: **Pray for** the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil, The Most Revd Naudal Alves Gomes - Primate of Brazil & Bishop of Curitiba

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Glen Carbon, The Rt. Rev. Anthony F.M. Clavier, Vicar; Ng’ambo Parish: Rev. Naftari Mathew, Tabora, Tanzania; The Parish of Christ The Redeemer and St. Peter, San Juan de Miraflores, Peru, The Rev. Misael Varillas, Regional Vicar; Trinity Church, Mattoon, Admitted to the Diocese, 1908; Birthday of The Rev Zachary D. Brooks, Jacksonville.

Monday, January 28

Mark 5:21-43 “*Do not fear, only believe.*” (v.36b)

It begins with a slight tightening of my chest. My breathing becomes shallow... like thin air. Imagined consequences pour down like cold rain on a desolate, rock-strewn high mountain trail. Fear dominates my mind. I feel embarrassed. I’m not supposed to feel this way: it is “cowardly” and “of little faith.” My shadow side rises like fog in the gray evening light. At times like this, the only way up is down. I begin a to breathe intentionally. My exhale is a relaxation and lasts longer than my inhale. With each breath, I welcome the fear. I tenderly embrace it as I would my frightened child. I welcome the tightness in my chest... the chill in my heart... the emptiness. Over and over again, I repeat, “I

welcome this fear... I give up all desire to control this situation, to be safe at any cost and to feel worthy." In time, the mist begins to clear. I glimpse the grace that always embraces me. Peace seeps in through the cracks of my affliction.

Isaiah 48:1-11; Psalms 41, 52; Galatians 1:1-17

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Long Island (*The Episcopal Church*), The Rt Revd Lawrence Provenzano; Swansea & Brecon (*Wales*), The Most Revd John Davies (*Primate*); Guadalcanal (*Melanesia*), The Rt Revd Nathan Tome

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Very Rev. Gus L. Franklin, Springfield, and Carla, widow of The Rev Canon Dr. William N. Malottke, Carol Stream.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Rachael Kimmerling's birthday.

Tuesday, January 29

Psalms 45 *My heart overflows with a goodly theme....* (v.1a)

I am four hours into the North Ten Mile Creek trail. The creek laughs and splashes beside me as it rolls over smooth grey rocks. It sparkles in the sun as it jumps three feet into a foamy pool below. Mountains tower above me... green behemoths crowned with rugged rocks showing off scars carved by centuries of ice and snow. The trail invites me into the shadowy woods. Sunlight breaks through the green canopy in bright yellow shards. The ground is moist. The rocks are slippery with mold. Small rivulets cut across my path like children racing each other down the mountain side. The trail breaks out into the sunlight. A green meadow scoots off to my right. Red and purple and yellow wildflowers dance with the soft cold breeze flowing down the mountain side. Butterflies showing off their brightly colored wings dart in and out of the light. A hawk screeches out its ancient call. I stop. Stillness embraces me. Reflection ceases. Time pauses. The woods and I are one. A goodly theme overflows my heart.

Isaiah 48:12-21; Galatians 1:18—2:10; Mark 6:1-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Los Angeles (*The Episcopal Church*), The Rt Revd John Harvey Taylor, and The Rt Revd Diane Jardine Bruce; Swaziland (*Southern Africa*), The Rt Revd Ellinah Ntombi Wamukoya

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Trinity Church, Lincoln, Anniversary of the Consecration of Church building, 1921.

Wednesday, January 30

Isaiah 49:1-12 *But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God."* (v.4)

As I write this, our country is facing what appears to be a great constitutional crisis. I wake up each morning to a knot in my gut. Bitterness hangs in the air like the grey smoke from the wildfires raging in the region. Our conversations, like our

air quality, are unsafe. The angry mood claws my soul raw. Six weeks ago, I took a vow to follow Jesus' teaching on peace as found on the Sermon on the Mount: to choose equanimity, forgiveness, and reconciliation in the face of provocation and violence. Today, I am confronted by violence within my own heart. My anger and resentment lead me to violent thoughts. How long before they lead to violent acts? I fear what it will be like by the time you read this. Yet, my hope lies in the sustaining love of God. I trust that just as God is the source of my desire to accept this invitation, God has already provided abundant grace for me to live into Jesus' peace this moment... and each moment after that.

Psalm 119:49-72; Galatians 2:11-21; Mark 6:13-29

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Louisiana (*The Episcopal Church*), The Rt Revd Morris Thompson, Jr.; Sydney (*Australia*), The Most Revd Dr Glenn Davies, The Rt Revd Chris Edwards, The Rt Revd Peter Hayward, The Rt Revd Ivan Lee, The Rt Revd Peter Lin, and The Rt Revd Michael Stead; Tabora (*Tanzania*), The Rt Revd Elias Chakupewa

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Almighty God, to truly know you is everlasting life.

Thursday, January 31

Mark 6:30-46 *He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while."* (v.31)

I wake up to stars hanging like diamonds on black velvet. I have come to this sacred valley to cultivate stillness: an unreflective awareness of presence. For decades, pilgrims have come to this retreat in the Colorado mountains to listen to the music of silence reverberating off majestic mountains. I shiver as I slip on my clothes and step into the darkness. My headlamp's bright yellow light dances down the trail. I relax into the soft rhythm of my boots crunching on the gravel. I reach the chapel and slip into my chair. I set my timer. My breathing becomes smooth... intentional. I softly and ever-so-gently consent to God's presence and action within. Thoughts come. Again, ever-so-gently, I consent to God's presence and action within. Eventually, thoughts become irrelevant. Stillness abounds. My timer's gentle gong invites me back to ordinary consciousness. I sit for a few minutes savoring the transition. I experience all that is, is in God; and, all that is in God is One.

Isaiah 49:13-23; Psalm 50; Galatians 3:1-14

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Luapula (*Central Africa*), The Rt Revd Robert Mumbi; Taita-Taveta (*Kenya*), The Rt Revd Liverson Mng'onda

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Ordination to the Priesthood, Richard A. Pugliese, Topsham, ME; Birthday of Theresa, widow of The Rev. Canon Anthony C. Viton, Mt. Carmel.

Friday, February 1

Isaiah 50:1-11 *Who among you fears... yet trusts in the name of the LORD and relies upon his God? (v.10)*

I sit in my study waiting for her PET scan results. Outside my window the sun is bright and the sky is blue. Inside, my room and heart are grey. There is a heaviness in my chest. One call can change everything... for everyone. Our lives will never be the same. The occasional text inquiring if we have heard reflects our isolation as we wait. Each of us, separated by the demands of our quotidian tasks, waits in the silo of our life. Having been around long enough to experience that very nasty things happen to beautiful, innocent people, I am afraid. Praying for my mother as I watched her die of cancer taught me prayers are not always answered as one feels they should. How can I embrace her pain and affirm life? Where can I find the courage to be... the strength to love? I don't know. And yet, it comes... in the image of the cross. Where God incarnate died in solidarity with me and my condition. Somehow, ineffably, that has always been enough.

Psalms 40, 54; Galatians 3:15-22; Mark 6:47-56

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lucknow (*North India*), The Rt Revd Peter Baldev; Taita-Taveta (*Kenya*), The Rt Revd Liverson Mng'onda; Guatemala (*Central America*), The Most Revd Armando Guerra Soria; The Revd Silvestre Romero

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Almighty God, we ask for power, but even more for grace.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Charlotte & Charlie Casperson's wedding anniversary.

Saturday, February 2

Psalms 55 *Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you. (v.22a)*

I am at our mountain house, a lifelong dream come true. It lies embraced in ten acres of deep green Carolina woods. Throughout the year, nature struts her stuff. Multicolored maple leaves and glowing dogwood blossoms grace every view. Black bears sniff around the meadow. Deer scan our deck from thick shrubs below. Brown-grey turkey hens and chicks march through our yard, heads bobbing to the rhythm of their trot. Gobblers show off their bright red neckties as they bring up the rear... proud... puffed up. Birds send me their good morning Hallelujahs from the misty morning fog. This morning, tropical storm Florence is finally here after a leisurely, destructive stroll up from the coast. Bright red "flash flood warning!" banners scroll across my weather app. I imagine rain pouring on our deck... water rushing down our driveways as from a firehose... the wind howling and the trees moaning from the ridge above. I feel burdened... uneasy... trapped. Then, I am startled by the sustaining love of God and I am whole.

Isaiah 51:1-8; Galatians 3:23-29; Mark 7:1-23

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lui (*South Sudan*), The Most Revd Stephen Dokolo Ismail Mbalah; Taiwan (*The Episcopal Church*), The Rt Revd David Lai; Guildford (*England*), The Rt Revd Andrew John Watson, The Rt Revd Jo Bailey Wells, and The Rt Revd Christopher John Hill

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Feast of Title, Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign; Birthday of the Rev Christopher L. Ashmore, Jacksonville.

by Nestor de Armas

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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., Debbie T., Robin L., Margret L., Christopher L.

Pray for the Faithful Departed:

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