

Good News Daily

Volume XIX

February 3-9, 2019

Number 5

Sunday, February 3

Psalm 29 *“The LORD will give strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.”* (v.11 NIV)

It’s no fun getting old! Getting old is not for sissies! How often have I heard those and similar words from friends lately? Our bodies seem to disintegrate as the aches and pains intrude.

The crunch of metal on metal and unexpected thud stunned me. The young man approached my driver’s side window. “Are you ok?” he asked. My angry retort was, “Why did you hit me? I’m sick. I’m on my way to the doctor. I don’t have time for this!” All I could think of was, I would miss my appointment. No matter how many times I vow not to ask the Lord *why*, I still do.

I often relate my life to David’s. I can’t simply touch the hem of Christ’s garment and be healed from my infirmities (see Matthew 14:34-36), so I cling to the words of David: “The LORD will give strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.”

Isaiah 51:9-16; Psalm 24; Hebrews 11:8-16; John 7:14-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: **Pray for** the Anglican Church of Burundi, The Most Revd Martin Blaise Nyaboho - Archbishop of Burundi & Bishop of Makamba

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Christ Church, Springfield, The Rev Dr Gregory Tournoux, Rector; Mbugani Parish: Rev. Leonard Birusha, Tabora, Tanzania; The Parish of Jesus the Saviour, Villa El Salvador, Lima, Peru, The Rev. Carlos Quispe, Priest in Charge.

Monday, February 4

Psalm 56 *When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid.* (vv.3-4)

2,000 miles away in the mountains of San Diego, a firestorm erupted. The news called it a “war zone.” The phone and electric down. My daughter and family live in the mountain town they evacuated. I picture her grabbing pictures and heirlooms, and hustling kids and pets into the truck. My heart skips a beat. The year was 2007. Twenty-four hours later news trickles in from relatives. My aunt and uncle are safe. My cousin lost her home to the inferno. My daughter would also be evacuated from the town they fled to. There’s nothing for me to do but pray for the safety of my loved ones and the firefighters who risk their lives as they watch their own homes burn while saving homes of others. I remind myself to have faith and trust in God. A calm replaces my panic.

Fires aren't new to Californians. Each year they rage through the dry brush, sometimes taking lives and homes with them. My family was safe, and my grandson would grow up to become a firefighter.

Isaiah 51:17-23; Psalms 57, 58; Galatians 4:1-11; Mark 7:24-37

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lusaka (*Central Africa*), The Rt Revd David Njovu; Tamale (*West Africa*), The Rt Revd Jacob Ayeebo; Guinea (*West Africa*), The Rt Revd Jacques Boston

DIOCESAN CYCLE: God, fill us with your grace.

Tuesday, February 5

Mark 8:1-10 *About four thousand were present. After he sent them away, he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.* (vv. 9-10)

Jesus *went* away. Other translations of the Bible say He *immediately* got into the boat; *straightaway* he entered a ship; and he went *straight* to the boat. This wasn't the first time Jesus left a crowd. As God in human form, He battled exhaustion the same as us.

Even though I live alone, I sometimes feel the need to get away—to renew my soul. In my neighborhood, hidden in a growth of overgrown trees and wilderness, there's a river. I love the walk to the river. I can sit on the bank and commune with God and nature—the music of the flowing river, the beauty of the Spanish moss hanging from old oak trees, cypress trees with their roots protruding above the water. Dragon flies circle above. I take comfort in the sights and sounds.

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35). Before Jesus was arrested, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray (see Mark 14:32).

Isaiah 52:1-12; Psalms 61, 62; Galatians 4:12-20

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lusitanian Church (*Portugal*), The Rt Revd Jorge Pina Cabral; Tanga (*Tanzania*), The Most Revd Dr Maimbo Mndolwa (*Primate*)

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Ordination to the Priesthood, Sean D. Ferrell, Champaign.

Wednesday, February 6

Mark 8:11-26 *When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?" He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around."* (vv.23b-24)

Have you ever viewed the pictures made by clouds? Or remember searching for objects placed in pictures of trees in children's magazines? From my porch I can see most of my backyard; the gardens with vegetables and flowers, the palms, and the aloe lining the white rock path leading to the lime green Adirondack chairs. I also see the tall oak trees. The porch is where I like to study and write. One early morning as I prayed, I looked up to heaven through the branches and leaves when

the face of Jesus appeared. His face as projected in many paintings was perfectly outlined by the oak leaves.

The blind man Jesus healed said he saw people who looked like trees. I imagine his first sight was in black and white—much like my picture of Jesus in the dawn. The blind man would soon see clearly. Would I? Each morning, Jesus remained in my tree until the leaves began to fall—a reminder Jesus is with me always, even when I can't see Him.

Isaiah 54:1-17; Psalm 72; Galatians 4:21-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Luwero (*Uganda*), The Rt Revd Eridard Kironde Nsubuga; Tarime (*Tanzania*), The Rt Revd R Mwita Akiri; Tasmania (*Australia*), The Rt Revd Dr Richard Condie, The Rt Revd Christopher Jones

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Anniversary of the Consecration of The Rt Rev Donald M Hultstrand, IX Bishop of Springfield. Birthday of Brenda, wife of the Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Bishop of Springfield; Wedding anniversary of The Very Rev. Sean D. and Kiezha Ferrell, Champaign.

Thursday, February 7

Mark 8:27—9:1 *But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" He said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."* (v.33)

Jesus was teaching his disciples the Son of Man must suffer many things. He would be rejected, killed, and after three days would rise again. Peter took him aside and rebuked him. Then Jesus rebuked Peter in front of the other disciples: "Get behind me Satan!" With an exclamation mark! Wow! My heart goes out to Peter. How devastated he must have been. How humiliating to be chastised in front of his peers. I'm sure I would run away sobbing and keep running. On the other hand, this was another of Peter's "open mouth, insert foot" situations. In the previous verses (vv.27-30) when Jesus asked him, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." After saying that, why would Peter even think he could rebuke Jesus? Poor Peter. He had a lot to learn, as do we.

I would never want Jesus to look at me and say, "Satan get behind me!" But Peter gives me hope because he learned. He believed. He was restored. And Jesus never stopped loving him.

Isaiah 55:1-13; Psalms 70, 71; Galatians 5:1-15

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lweru (*Tanzania*), The Rt Revd Godfrey Mbelwa; *Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia*, The Rt Revd Te Kitohi Wiremu Pikaahu

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, bless the work that we do.

Friday, February 8

Galatians 5:16-24 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.* (vv.22-23a)

Her name was Maria. I met her on a Gaither Homecoming Cruise to the Caribbean. Each time I rushed to the restroom I found her cleaning sinks and folding terry cloth hand towels for our use. One day, as we waited for a tender to take us ashore, I looked for a restroom. The nearest one had a yellow caution tape across the entrance which read "Cleaning." Near panic, I knocked and called out, "Hello." The young woman, smile on her face, let me in. I was washing up when she said in her broken English, "You're all such a blessing to us." I told her how we appreciated the clean restrooms. We hugged. Now friends, I learned of her family.

Since that day, whenever I enter a public restroom and someone's cleaning, I make it a point to thank them for keeping it clean. At Cracker Barrel, Walmart, and the Connecticut airport, this act of kindness made someone happy and brought surprised looks from bystanders. Acts of kindness put smiles on the faces of others.

Isaiah 56:1-8; Psalm 69; Mark 9:2-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Machakos (*Kenya*), The Rt Revd Joseph Mutungi; *Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia*, The Most Revd Don Tamihere (*Primate*); Gujarat (*North India*), The Rt Revd Silvans Christian

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of the Rev Brian T. Kellington, The Villages, FL; Wedding Anniversary of The Venerable Shawn W. and Mary Ann Denney, Springfield.

Saturday, February 9

Mark 9:14-29 *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief."* (vv.23-24 NKJV)

"Maybe you should practice what you write." These few words have thrown me for a loop. I thought I was sharing a couple things going on in my life, not complaining. As a Christian writer, I've always thought myself a faith-filled woman. I might have a relapse for a day or two, but my faith comes right back. Now, the seed of doubt has been planted. Perhaps I don't have enough faith. Is this what others think? Am I a hypocrite? I pick up my Bible and turn to Mark 9: "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." I reach for a Study Bible and read the same words in another version. Below it tells me, "Even those who believe can be nagged by doubt and hopelessness." In verse 29, Jesus says prayer and fasting is required in some difficult situations. Since I don't feel hopeless and I don't believe prayer is my problem, is the answer fasting? I've never fasted, at least not for more than a few hours. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief.

Isaiah 57:3-13; Psalms 75, 76; Galatians 5:25—6:10

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madhya Kerala (*South India*), The Most Revd Thomas Kanjirappally Oommen (*Primate*); Gusau (*Nigeria*), The Rt Revd John Garba Danbinta

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Save us and help us, we beseech thee O Lord.
ST. MATTHEWS: Wedding Anniversary of Kathie and Loren Dyson

by Shirley J. Conley

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Pray for the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Jenna A., Mary, James T., Julie C., Bill B., Ms. Shayne, Diane B., Steve J., Carol D., Debbie T., Robin L., Margret L., Christopher L.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: Barbara Allsup

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