

Good News Daily

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Sunday, October 27

Luke 10:25-37 “*But a certain Samaritan who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion...*” (vv.33a NAS)

While I loved the group of Christians I grew up with as a teenager, they did have a zero tolerance for other religions. It was a conflict for me since I also claimed a colony of loving Muslim relatives on my mother’s side.

My mother herself risked her life during the 1944 bombing raids on Japan to save my father—a starving American POW. Her father was known to constantly invite strangers to his home. And her mother died of a heart attack while on a walk to bring money to someone in need.

How on earth could I condemn my relatives as my elders were teaching us to do? And Christian elders who, themselves, were caring and loving and went the extra mile as well?

I could never square myself with my mother’s religion, although I tried. But I could never square with my elders’ sweeping condemnation of Muslims either. Christ charged us to love God and our neighbor. In today’s reading, he used a man from a religious sect as an example of that neighbor—the Good Samaritan.

Haggai 1:1—2:9; Psalms 63, 98; Acts 18:24—19:7

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for the Church of Ceylon (Extra-Provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury) The Rt Revd Dhiloraj Ranjit Canagasabey - Bishop of Colombo, The Rt Revd Keerthisiri Fernando - Bishop of Kurunegala

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield, The Very Rev. Andrew S. Hook, Dean; St. Stephen’s Cathedral Church, Tabora, Tanzania, Rt. Rev. Elias Chakupewa, Dean,

Rev. Canon Rogers Kashimba, Sub-dean, and the Rev. Lucas Ngassa, Curate; The Parish of Christ The Redeemer, Arequipa, Peru, Rev'd Juan Marcos Ayala, Rector; Birthday of The Rev. Canon Martha J. Bradley, Springfield.

Monday, October 28

Zechariah 1:7-17 “*But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.*” (v.15)

In Zechariah we learn that power, especially ordained by God that is later abused, is big trouble. What is the tipping point? Zechariah points to personal gain.

Based on a true story, the 2013 film *Philomena* exposed the horrific abuse of power of a religious organization orchestrating an orphanage by cruel financial gain. The scheme was to take in unwed pregnant girls and provide “penance.” However,

the penance was not only cruel, it profited the orphanage as well; first by selling the girl's babies to wealthy Hollywood stars, then contracting the girls to slave labor. While the film had its share of artistic license, the essence of this abuse was confirmed by numerous former residents who later emerged to corroborate the scandal in chilling detail.

Seventeenth century theologian Matthew Poole paraphrased today's verse as, "I whipped to smart but you wounded to bleed." At the heart of this is the sobering command from Christ to always check ourselves: "For in the way you judge, you will be judged" (Matthew 7:2).

Psalms 41, 52; Revelation 1:4-20; Matthew 12:43-50

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Renk (*South Sudan*) The Rt Revd Joseph Garang Atem; Daejeon (*Korea*) The Most Revd Moses Nagjun Yoo (*Primate*); Kumi (*Uganda*) The Rt Revd Edison Irigei

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Richard A. Swan, Decatur, Ordination to the Priesthood.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Mark Smith's birthday.

Tuesday, October 29

Matthew 13:1-9 "And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty." (v.8)

Recently our pastor told a story of a shoemaker concerned that his life might not be amounting to much. Troubled, he approached his pastor: "I am not a deacon, or an evangelist, or a missionary. I'm just a shoemaker—how can *I* serve God?" The pastor sat quietly and thought then turned to him and said, "Make a good shoe."

There is something about spiritual aspiration that always seems a little suspect with Christ. When he overheard his disciples arguing about who is chief among them, he shocked them by saying, "he who will be first shall be last." When James and John begged Christ whether they should call down thunder on a Samaritan, he scolded them. And when Peter attacked an approaching soldier, Jesus rebuked Peter and healed the soldier.

Christ redirects aspiration. Likewise, in today's reading he insists *how much* my life yields isn't as important as that it yields—even its just making a good shoe.

Ezra 5:1-17; Psalm 45; Revelation 4:1-11

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rhode Island (*The Episcopal Church*) The Rt Revd Nicholas Knisely; Dallas - The Rt Revd George R. Sumner, Jr.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: O Lord, may we live in your presence and glorify you in our daily lives.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Alley Roberson's birthday.

Wednesday, October 30

Revelation 5:1-10 *And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (v.9)*

During his tenure, Pope John Paul II not only traveled more than any other pope in history, he traveled more than all of them combined. His visits to 129 countries were equivalent to circling the earth 31 times. While I was not raised Roman Catholic, John Paul's passion and outreach thrilled me.

When he addressed a crowd in Detroit in 1987, he declared "every human person—no matter how vulnerable or helpless, no matter how young or old, no matter how healthy, handicapped or sick, no matter how useful or productive—is a being of inestimable worth." He went on to say that the ultimate test of America was, "to respect every human person."

John Paul's successor, Pope Francis, today insists we "build bridges not walls." This is the Christianity I know. That Christ's sacrifice was targeted to peoples of *every* nation. His sacrifice was not and is not restricted or exclusive to anyone on earth.

Ezra 6:1-22; Psalm 119:49-72; Mathew 13:10-17

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rift Valley (*Tanzania*) The Rt Revd John Daudi Lupaa; Damaturu (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd Yohannah A Audu; Dar-es-Salaam (*Tanzania*) The Rt Revd Jackson Sosthenes.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: All Saints, Morton, Consecration of church building, 1976.

Thursday, October 31

Psalm 50 *"I know every bird of the mountains, and everything that moves in the field is Mine." (v.11)*

In 2015 a white-tailed eagle set a world record for the highest recorded bird flight. Released from Dubai's Burj Khalifa tower (the tallest man-made structure on earth), the eagle began its half-mile descent with an attached camera. Stunning video captured the expanse of Dubai's territory below as the eagle soared.

At ground level, trainer and eagle conservationist Jacques-Oliver Travers stood waving his hands in what seemed a crazy attempt to capture the eagle's attention. After nearly 5 minutes of soaring, the video captures the eagle's jarring discovery with a sudden torpedo-like descent—amazingly—straight to the beckoning arms of his trainer.

I am sometimes tempted to think I am nothing in a sea of humanity. And yet, if a bird can spot a single individual a half a mile away, how much more can the omniscient Holy Spirit pierce my own personal inner most thoughts, motives, struggles, and prayers? I took comfort knowing if a mere bird can do this, how much more an all-knowing God?

Nehemiah 1:1-11; Revelation 5:11—6:11; Matthew 13:18-23

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rio de Janeiro (*Brazil*) The Rt Revd Eduardo Coelho Grillo; Davao (*Philippines*) The Rt Revd Jonathan Labasan Casimina.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Rex Schaeffer's birthday.

Friday, November 1

Matthew 13:24-30 *"The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!'"* (vv.27-28a)

In 955 AD, Pope John XII committed adultery, raped women, and invoked pagan gods. In 1032, Pope Benedict IX actually sold the papacy not once but twice. And, in 1513 Pope Leo promoted indulgences and killed cardinals. Studying early church history, it is a wonder Christ's message has survived at all. And yet it has.

In today's reading Jesus warned us to expect charlatans. What's even more interesting is that he was not threatened by them. Christ's message here does not weed out evil, but leaves it—for a later, wiser, and more efficient reaping. It reminds me of when Christ commented on religious hypocrites who flaunt their practice. Almost casually dismissing them, he quipped, "they have their reward."

Given that, whether the Church's evils are to be weeded out early or later makes for an interesting discussion. Regardless, judgment will come to evil, Christ assures. And this from a man who carries a profile of an extraordinary calm and secure person who, when faced with adversity, has a checkmate up his sleeve at every turn.

Nehemiah 2:1-20; Psalms 40, 54; Revelation 6:12—7:4

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rio Grande (*The Episcopal Church*) The Rt Revd Michael Vono; Delaware - The Rt Revd Kevin S. Brown; Kurunegala (*Ceylon*) The Rt Revd Keerthisiri Fernando

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Feast of Title, All Saints Episcopal Church, Morton; Sheryl L. Black, Whittington, Ordination to the Priesthood; Martha Bradley, Springfield, Ordination to the Diaconate.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Bob Kohlhasse' birthday.

Saturday, November 2

Revelation 7:4-17 *"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore...for the Lamb shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes."* (vv.16-17)

In today's reading, John is referring to a particular group of people. Specifically, this is the fate, he declares, of those who have come out of the "great tribulation."

I am not a biblical scholar and I cannot pretend to know what the great tribulation is or was. Nor can I even claim to have endured tribulation as many have. I have never been to war. I was fortunate to have never known poverty. I was raised in an upper-income neighborhood in a large family and with loving parents. My career was full and rewarding. My friends, treasures. Maybe life was a little lonesome.

But as I sit alone today having endured two heart surgeries within the last 60 days, I cannot help but pause and take stock. And hope. Hope that, while I may not have endured the great tribulation, I may still be allowed to know this joyful fate—if not around the corner, eventually.

Nehemiah 4:1-23; Psalm 55; Matthew 13:31-35

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rochester (*England*) The Rt Revd James Langstaff, The Rt Revd Simon David Burton-Jones; Rochester (*The Episcopal Church*) The Rt Revd Prince Singh; Kushtia (*Bangladesh*) The Rt Revd Samuel Sunil Mankhin (*Primate*).

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord Jesus, come, set us free to worship without fear and guide us on the pathway of peace.

by William Bacon

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Pray for the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Margret L., Allan H., James G.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: Daniel T., Justin P.

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