

Good News Daily

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Sunday, February 9

Mark 10:13-22 *Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”* (v.15 NRSV)

Recently, I was eating lunch in a restaurant booth. In the booth across from me was a mom, dad, and a girl who appeared to be about five years old. I noticed that the parents spent most of their time with their attention glued to their cell phones. After about 15 minutes of trying to connect with her mesmerized parents, the little girl said, “I don’t know why you brought me, you’re not listening to me at all!” Her parents tried to explain why their behavior, wasn’t really their behavior. The food arrived. Mom and Dad went back to their phones.

That little girl presented her distracted parents a simple truth, simply told, but her distracted parents couldn’t really “receive” that simple truth. I think part of what Jesus means in this quote is that unless we can hear simple truth, simply told, we won’t be able to receive the kingdom of God, because we’re distracted by our attention to so much information that we can’t “hear” the simple truth. simply told.

Let’s listen for it!

Genesis 24:50-67; Psalms 93, 96; 2 Timothy 2:14-21

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Pray for the Anglican Church of Canada, The Most Revd Linda Nicholls - Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: The Church of the Holy Trinity, Danville, the Very Rev Richard I. Lewis, Priest in Charge; Sikonge Parish: The Rev. Denis Lawrence, Tabora, Tanzania; The Mission of St. Mary The Virgin, Villa Maria del Triunfo, Lima, Peru & supported missions, The Rev. Aurelio Rodriguez, Priest in Charge. **ST. MATTHEW’S:** Kathie & Loren Dyson’s wedding anniversary.

Monday, February 10

Hebrews 13:1-16 *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”* (v.8)

I have a neighbor who enjoys telling me all that is “wrong” with Christianity. I was working in the yard, when he wandered over to deliver his weekly criticism: “Christianity is so boring! It’s the same old Jesus doing things you’ve heard about a million times before. If I needed a religion, I’d want it to be changing and different most of the time!”

“Well actually Christianity is changing and different,” I said. “You’re looking at it from the wrong side. If you looked and listened to Christians, you’d discover that as their life changes, and the world changes, they’re constantly bringing new and different realities before Jesus, and asking for his help and loving kindness to

deal with what they present. They can bring these things to him precisely because Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever. Jesus is trustworthy, dependable, and more loving and powerful than all that Christians have and will ever offer before him. A savior who is constantly different and changing isn't very reliable."

Jesus is dependable! That is really Good News!

Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 80; John 7:37-52

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madhya Kerala (South India), The Most Revd Thomas Kanjirappally Oommen (Primate); Te Pihopatanga o Upoko o Te Ika (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia), The Right Revd Waitohiariki Quayle; Gusau (Nigeria), The Right Revd John Garba Danbinta.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev Cynthia A. Sever, Alton.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday celebrations for Donna Dyson, and June Gault.

Tuesday, February 11

John 7:53—8:11 *Jesus said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." (v.7b)*

There is an ancient Christian story about an elder monk coming to a gathering of monks eager to denounce another monk for a transgression. The elder showed up with a pole across his shoulder. Hanging from the front of the pole was a small bag filled with sand. At the back of the pole was a large bag so full of sand the it leaked out of the bag in a steady stream.

The monks asked the elder the meaning of the pole. He said that the small bag in front was the denounced monk's sin. "I keep careful watch on that bag," he said. "I never take my attention off it." "What is the large, leaking bag behind you," the other monks asked? The elder said, "Those are my sins. I never notice them."

We need to fully acknowledge our bag in back, before we fix our attention on the other person's bag in front. Perhaps we can find a way to support and help heal the person we're about to injure by labeling a sinner.

Genesis 26:1-6, 12-33; Psalm 78:1-39; Hebrews 13:17-25

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madi & West Nile (Uganda), The Right Revd Charles Collins Andaku;

Te Pihopatanga o Upoko o Te Waipounamu (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia), The Right Revd Richard Wallace; Guyana (West Indies), The Right Revd Charles Davidson.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Restoration of The Rt. Rev. Anthony F. M. Clavier to the Episcopate.

Wednesday, February 12

Romans 12:1-8 *For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.* (v.3)

Lately, I seem to find myself being shoved out of the way in a checkout line, at a stop sign, or in a parking lot. I've heard many people make the same complaint. It seems that our culture has spawned a "me first" entitlement attitude. That attitude appears to say, "I'm important! You're not!" I confess that, all too often I respond with behavior that says, "No! Im important! You're not!!

Paul gives us some sound spiritual and psychological advice about using "sober judgement" while thinking and acting "more highly" towards others than we actually deserve. Jesus gives us similar advice: "Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you" (Matthew 7:12). Paul also gives Christians a standard for the "sober judgement." That standard is the "measure of faith" that God has given us. Whew! That is sobering!

Genesis 27:1-29; Psalm 119:97-120; John 8:12-20

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madras (South India), The Right Revd George Stephen Jeyaraj; Temotu (Melanesia), The Most Revd Leonard Dawea (Primate).

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Jean, widow the Rev Canon Charles Draper, Springfield,

Thursday, February 13

Romans 12:9-21 *If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* (v.18)

A few weeks ago, two brothers, with whom I've been friends since high school, announced to their families that they will no longer speak to one another. The reason is they totally disagree about American politics. As incredibly tragic as that seems, this was not the first time I've heard about similar decisions in other families.

I'm sure Paul was hearing about similar decisions in the chaotic world of the first century. Paul's advice is straightforward: If it's your choice, choose to live peaceably with others.

I served in the Marine Corps during the Viet Nam war. One of the things I've realized about war is that it's very hard to shoot someone you know, understand, and love. An "enemy" is always someone that you don't know well enough to understand, or care about.

Living peaceably with someone else means you will seek to understand them and care about them. Frankly, that's a Jesus value that transcends worldly values.

It's something to pray and ponder about...

Genesis 27:30-45; Psalms 83, 146, 147; John 8:21-32

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madurai-Ramnad (South India), The Right Revd Marialouis Joseph; Temuco (Chile), The Right Revd Abelino Manuel Apeleo; Tennessee (The Episcopal Church), The Right Revd John Bauerschmidt.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: O Father, my hope, O Son, my refuge, O Holy Spirit, my protector, Holy Trinity, glory to thee.

Friday, February 14

Romans 13:1-14 *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.* (v.10)

Today is Valentine's Day! In our society and culture this is a day to celebrate romantic love. I think this day can also be a good day to ponder a deeper kind of love, of which romantic love is an initial gateway.

Early Christians observed this day as a commemoration of the life and sacrifice of one of several martyrs named Valentinus. All these men did something for one or more people that improved or helped fulfill their lives. Those gifts ended up costing the Valentinus' their lives. Their self-giving love emulates the sacrificial, self-giving love of Christ upon the Cross.

Sacrificial, self-giving love is the essence of Christian faith and life. It's about giving to another person what they need to improve or fulfill their life, without asking or expecting anything in return. That is something that's very hard to do! The good news is that God will give us what we need to be able to offer a sacrificial, self-giving gift to someone who needs our gift!

Genesis 27:46—28:4, 10-22; Psalm 88; John 8:33-47

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Mahajanga (Indian Ocean), The Right Revd Spencer Hall Speers; Terekeka (South Sudan), The Right Revd Paul Modi Farjala.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: God, your Word tells us that true religion with contentment is great wealth.

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

Saturday, February 15

Psalm 90 *For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past.* (v.4a)

I'm always intrigued to listen to people having conversations about God. Often the ways in which folks describe and talk about God makes God sound like a human being, only bigger!

I find myself doing the same thing, especially when I'm praying about what's happening in my life. The only way I seem to get myself thinking about God in a more realistic way is to recall that God is the "origin and destiny" of all that was, is, and will ever be. If all that was, is, and will ever be all exists together in God, then time must be different for God than it is for us, or (more hard for us to understand) God doesn't have anything that resembles what we experience as "time."

But here's the good news: God who holds all of the past, present, and future together in unity, God who may not have "time," loves you, wants all the best for you, and desires a deeply connected relationship with you. Wowzers!

Genesis 29:1-20; Psalm 87; Romans 14:1-23; John 8:47-59

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Maiduguri (Nigeria), The Right Revd Emmanuel Morris; Territory of the People (Canada), The Right Revd Barbara Jean Andrews; Gwagwalada (Nigeria), The Right Revd Moses Tabwaye.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Nada, wife of The Rev Gregory Tournoux, Springfield.

by John Fergusson

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

Pray for the Faithful Departed: Charlie C. and Steve W.

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.