

Good News Daily

**Volume
XX**

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Number 25

Sunday, June 21

Luke 12:49-56 *“I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!”* (v.49 NIV)

Where is the “Gentle Jesus, meek and mild” of Charles Wesley’s hymn? He’s certainly not here in this verse. These are words of a fiery revolutionary. Fire evokes frightening images of pain, destruction, and separation. Real fires can literally destroy whole cities; “to fire” means to separate people from their jobs. Crowds get “fired up” and begin to riot. Fire can be chaos unleashed.

However, fire controlled and targeted brings heat to cold places whether in a physical space or in a heart. It heals and cleanses by burning away that which is harmful. Spiritually, the fire of true love for God melts away the dross of sin from the soul and enflames the spirit with passionate adoration.

Luke’s Jesus is truly burning with urgent love for humankind. He dedicated his earthly life to leading others to the Father through the Holy Spirit. His message to me: draw near to him even now and he will set my heart on fire, uniting me by participation in the eternal flame of love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father.

Numbers 14:26-45; Psalms 66, 67; Acts 15:1-12

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Pray for the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), The Most Revd Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba - Metropolitan & Primate of all Nigeria & Bishop of Abuja

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. George's Episcopal Church, Belleville, The Rev Robert (Rob) Eaton, Interim Rector; Kahama Parish, Tanzania, Rev. Can. Patrick Kulije, Rural Dean; The Mission of Santos María y Martha de Betania, Ilo, Peru, Rev'd Victor Condori, Vicar.

Monday, June 22

Matthew 19:13-22 *Jesus said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."* (v.14)

Why did Jesus single out little children as model citizens in God's kingdom? What important things became insignificant or different as I matured into adulthood? Here are four things I think about.

First, as a child I lived in and cherished the moment. Jesus said not to worry about tomorrow.

Second, I received *and opened* God's gifts of faith, hope, and love. I had an implicit, intuitive faith in God and my parents. Did I successfully retain these intuitive gifts as I learned more about the Trinity?

Third, I knew that God was great and that I was small in comparison. I was fairly immune to the comparison game among my peers when I was little. In other words, I was humble in the right way. Jesus wanted me to understand the immeasurable difference between God and myself and the measurable similarities among God's creatures.

Finally, as a little kid I could accept, even appreciate, mystery in ways I find more difficult now. I have to ask whether I measure up today to myself when I was a little child.

Numbers 16:1-19, Psalm 89:1-18; Romans 3:21-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nimule Area (South Sudan) The Rt Revd Martin Abuni , Arkansas (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Larry Benfield, Jerusalem (Jerusalem & Middle East) The Most Revd Suheil Dawani

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. James' Chapel, Marion, consecration of church building, 1930; Church of the Redeemer, Cairo, consecration of present church building, 1958.

Tuesday, June 23

Matthew 19:23-30 *“Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.”* (v.24)

I live in wealthy America today and desire to enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus’ words should leave me severely shaken. By biblical standards, I am rich; so am I simply out of luck?

Not necessarily. I found out that Jesus left two secrets to show me the way to enter under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But I must be extremely serious about gaining citizenship. First, there actually is a gate in Jerusalem called the Eye of the Needle. A camel can pass through but only if you remove its baggage and it bows down. Taken spiritually, this means to me that I must detach myself from bondage to worldly things and be humble before the Lord.

Second, a few verses later Jesus says: “With man this [salvation] is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” I must trust God implicitly. If I do, the Holy Spirit will guide me through faith, hope, and love to the Father and the Son and they will bring me to union with them.

Numbers 16:20-35; Psalms 97, 99, 100; Romans 4:1-12
ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nnewi (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Godwin Izundu Nmezinwa Okpala , Armagh (Ireland) Vacant, Johannesburg (Southern Africa) The Rt Revd Stephen Mosimanegape Moreo

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Show us your mercy, O Lord, and grant us your Salvation.

ST MATTHEWS: Patty & Jack Pitts’ wedding anniversary.

Wednesday, June 24

Psalm 101 *I will be careful to lead a blameless life—when will you come to me?* (v.2)

In the psalm David seems to be saying: “I’m doing all the right things, O Lord. When will I actually feel your presence in my life?” People throughout the ages have asked this question in

prose, poetry, and prayer, especially in times of distress. “Where have you hidden, Beloved, and left me moaning?” asks John of the Cross, the 16th century spiritual master and National Poet of Spain. Recently, Mother Teresa of Calcutta lamented that God seemed absent from her after she began her ministry in India.

How can one have a relationship with a God who feels absent, at least a great deal of the time? I believe that the relationship rests upon the hope of deep union with God eternally. God allows us to feel ecstasies and experience supernatural occurrences to help build a foundation of faith and to encourage us. *But feelings are not God.* If I go chasing after supernatural experiences, I will lose my way and may be misled. My time is better spent preparing myself for union by following the lead of Jesus.

Numbers 16:36-50; Psalm 109; Romans 4:13-25; Matthew 20:1-16

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nord Kivu (Congo) The Rt Revd Muhindo Isesomo , Armidale (Australia) The Rt Revd Richard Lewers

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Patronal Feast of St. John the Baptist, Mt. Carmel; Patronal Feast of St. John, Albion.

Thursday, June 25

Matthew 20:17-28 “*Not so with you. Instead whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.*” (v.26)

Here Jesus provides profound advice to leaders regarding their relationship to their followers. Leaders in any organization have three responsibilities. All are clearly services the leaders provide their followers to ensure the latter are successful. If the latter are successful, the organization should succeed.

The first is to set appropriate, clear, and measurable goals and to communicate those goals to everyone in the organization. The second is to make sure that each person knows what to do and is willing and able to do it. The third is to provide the resources and working environment (including the organization culture) necessary for each person to be successful.

Leaders with a servant mentality will consult and work with their followers in providing these services and will earn the respect and cooperation of the followers. Leaders who dictate what to do and how to do it (“lord it over them”) are much less likely to have this respect and cooperation and less likely to be successful.

Numbers 17:1-11; Psalm 105:1-22; Romans 5:1-11

ANGLICAN CYCLE: North Ankole (Uganda) The Rt Revd Stephen Namanya, Arochukwu/Ohafia (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Johnson Onuoha, Aru (Congo) The Rt Revd Georges Titre Ande
DIOCESAN CYCLE: O Lord God, your will is holy, loving and wise.

Friday, June 26

Romans 5:12-21 *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned. (v.12)*

When I was a young man, I believed that getting into heaven by being good and by having a personal relationship with Jesus was my main objective in this life. Having a personal relationship with Jesus meant believing Jesus was somehow God and was my friend.

I could miss out on heaven because, like everyone else, I was a sinner. Sin entered the world through Adam and was passed down from generation to generation. To me, God himself was a wrathful spirit counting up my sins until the day of my inevitable death.

Unfortunately, I missed out on the most delightful experience of this life—an intimate love involvement with God. At last I learned that God is deeply in love with each one of us and is constantly reaching out to us. All I really needed to do was fall in love—heart and mind in love. As a lover I naturally would try my best to please the Beloved and the Beloved would do the rest. As Augustine said, “Love and do what you like.”

Numbers 20:1-13; Psalm 102; Matthew 20:29-34

ANGLICAN CYCLE: North Carolina (The Episcopal Church)
The Rt Revd Samuel Rodman , Asaba (Nigeria) The Rt Revd
Justus Moge kwu

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Geoffrey E. L. Scanlon, Urbana, ordination
to the Priesthood; Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign, consecration
of present church building, 1918.

ST MATTHEWS: Christian Pitts' birthday.

Saturday, June 27

Matthew 21:1-11 *When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city
was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" (v.10)*

Jesus entered Jerusalem as a king. He rode a donkey to fulfill
a prophecy: "See, your king comes to you...riding on a donkey"
(Zachariah 9:9). People spread their cloaks before him as they
would for kings. They spread branches on the road in celebration.
Young and old sang, "Hosanna to the son of David;" hosanna
meaning "save"—a cry for deliverance.

At the same time, Jesus said he came to serve, not to be
served. He likely would have washed my feet if I had been at the
Last Supper. Who is this Jesus?

It's hard to think of Jesus as "my good buddy" as some do.
He is, after all, the King of kings—the absolute ruler of the eternal
kingdom of God. We, his subjects, are literally his own creation
and his love for us is unimaginably great. It is my honor to serve
Jesus with awe and reverence and the joy that comes from deep,
enduring love.

To me Jesus is "His Majesty," the hoped for Spouse of my
soul in spiritual union.

Numbers 20:14-29; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Romans 6:1-11
ANGLICAN CYCLE: North Central Philippines (Philippines)
The Most Revd Joel Atiwag Pachao , North Central Philippines
(Philippines) The Rt Revd Nestor D Poltic, Asante-Mampong
(West Africa) The Rt Revd Cyril Kobina Ben-Smith , Jos
(Nigeria) The Most Revd Benjamin Kwashi

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Mark E. Evans, Lincoln, ordination to the Priesthood.

ST MATTHEW: Sarah Pitts' birthday.

by Herbert Kierulff

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Pray for those sick and those in distress: Margaret L., Allan H., James G., Mark S., Karen P., Noah D.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: June G.

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.