

Good News Daily

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Sunday, July 12

Psalm 150 *Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!* (v.6 NRSV)

When we think of all God's creatures, we think of ourselves as being at the top of the chain of survival. Seldom do we think of other life forms praising the Lord.

Has anyone opened their door to the sound of birdcalls in the early morning and ever questioned that the bird's songs are to God's glory? Where I live, dusk descends on the pond accompanied by a magnificent bullfrog chorus, piling texture upon texture of hearty "ree-deeps," some in augmented and extended tones, others in quickened diminution.

If others of God's creatures sing His praises, how can we, the most highly evolved life form, do less? The psalmist, in his exuberance, visualizes all living beings praising the Creator, a planet full of voices lifted up in praise of the Lord.

Even the smallest of voices will sing out. When my grandson comes home from Junior Choir singing, "I love you, Jesus! I love your holy name!" his song praises the Lord. And my heart sings a song of praise, too. Sing along with me.

1 Samuel 17:50—18:4; Psalms 148, 149; Romans 10:4-17; Matthew 23:29-39

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for Peru - (South America) The Rt Revd Dr Harold William Godfrey; The Rt Revd Michael Alexander Chapman, Suffragan Bishop

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Carlinville, The Rev John R. Henry, Rector; Keza Mission, Burundian Refugee Settlement, Tanzania, Rev. Nestory Nintunze; Mission of the Ascension, and Mission of The Transfiguration, Lima, Peru, Rev'd Alberto Valdivia, Rev'd Allen Hill, Priests, Rev'd Rachel Hill, Deacon; Wedding anniversary of the Rev. Steven T. and Jael Thorp, Champaign.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for our supply clergy, Fr. Geoffrey Scanlon.

Monday, July 13

Psalm 25 *Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.* (v.5)

It most likely will take more than one day for the Lord to teach us and lead us; but one day of quiet or silence or in retreat is a good beginning.

The demands of our lives—everything from earning a living and raising children to giving of ourselves to our church and community—drain our reserves unless we take time to find the source of living water which refreshes and restores us.

This we can do by unplugging the television, turning off our radio and telephone, and listening in silence. Mother Theresa tells us what she heard in the silence: "I shall keep the silence of my heart with greater care, so that in the silence of my heart I hear His words of comfort and from the fullness of my heart I comfort Jesus in the distressing disguise of the poor."

In the silence, we begin to hear God. When we listen to Him, He guides us to the decisions we make and the paths we must follow. God probably won't ask of us what He asked of Mother Theresa. But we can listen as God instructs us to live the life He has given us, according to His will and plan for each of us.

1 Samuel 18:5-16, 27b-30; Acts 11:19-30; Mark 1:29-45

ANGLICAN CYCLE: (Pakistan) The Rt Revd Humphrey Peters

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of the Rev. Mark E. Evans, Lincoln, and the Rev. Thomas D. Patton, Traverse City, MI.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Conner Bennett.

Tuesday, July 14

Mark 2:1-12 *"I say to you, stand up, take your mat, and go to your home." And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"* (vv.11-12.)

Jesus healed a paralyzed man brought to him by four men who lowered him through the roof in order to avoid the crowd around Jesus. When the scribes heard Jesus tell the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven" (v.5), they accused him of blasphemy. To them, God alone had the power to forgive sins. So it was not the healing that upset them, but rather Jesus claiming the authority to forgive the man's sins.

Medical science has come a long way in two thousand years. With CAT scans and MRI's, advanced chemical analysis and even DNA testing, doctors can diagnose and heal our bodies in so many ways.

But who among them can forgive our sins? That is still only under the authority of Jesus Christ, the healer of our bodies, our minds, and our souls. Only Christ redeems. Only Christ saves. Let us never forget, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

1 Samuel 19:1-18; Psalms 26, 28; Acts 12:1-17

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Peterborough - (Canterbury, England) The Rt Revd Donald Spargo Allister;

Peterborough - Brixworth The Rt Revd John Holbrook

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Save us and help us, we beseech thee O Lord.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten.

Wednesday, July 15

Mark 2:13-22 *When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."* (v.17)

For a while there was a vogue in volunteering to work at one of our local institutions, the Coalition for the Homeless. Slots to serve there were in such demand that it was difficult to be scheduled. The creation of the Coalition for the Homeless and its continuing outreach is truly faith at work. If Jesus were here and now practicing his ministry, we would find him among the poor, the forgotten, the homeless, and the unemployed.

There is a tendency to believe that the only place we can serve the homeless is at the Coalition for the Homeless. Are we not being too much like sheep who have forgotten that Jesus Christ is the door? There is an entire world in need: children who are hungry, out of work parents, elderly people lonely and sick.

We can always help those in need by volunteering at the Rescue Mission, county medical clinics, Christian service centers, regional medical centers, or any of a number of Christian

outreach ministries. We could maybe even start by helping those we see regularly at the dinner table, or even in the mirror. The life Jesus saves might be our own.

1 Samuel 20:1-23; Psalm 38; Acts 12:18-25

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Phulbani - (North India) The Rt Revd Bijay Nayak

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, we ask for protection, but even more for guidance.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for those involved in our Music Ministry.

Thursday, July 16

Psalm 37:1-18 *Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so that you will live in the land and enjoy security.* (vv.1-3)

Gerard Manley Hopkins phrases our fretfulness and envy far better than I can: “Why do sinners’ ways prosper and why must disappointment all I endeavor end?”

The psalm tells us to “fret not” about wrongdoing in the lives of others who appear to prosper, but to “trust in the Lord and do good.” That is a very solid road map for a life lived well. We should always guard against being judgmental or envious of others. What really matters to God is what is in our hearts, not what is in our pockets.

My father’s response upon learning that he was to die within months was to tell his family, “I’ve had a good life.” If we follow this psalm, we, too, will have good lives.

A class in Christian beliefs at my church is called “The Journey.” At the end of the course, we’ve been asked to summarize our philosophy of living. I finally got mine down to one sentence: “Do your best, and let God do the rest.”

1 Samuel 20:24-42; Acts 13:1-12; Mark 2:23—3:6

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Pittsburgh - (III, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Dorsey W M McConnell

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

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Tori Roberson.

Friday, July 17

Mark 3:7-19a *And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons.* (vv.14-15).

In choosing his disciples, Jesus laid the foundations for building the future of the faith. The disciples were with him to learn how to teach, preach, and heal. They had the authority to cast out demons. The disciples were slow to catch on to what Jesus was telling them—that physically he would not be with them forever, but that the Spirit of Truth would be with them always. We are sometimes late in seeing the truth of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

What are some of the demons we need to cast out? Prayer and meditation will lead us to the answer. Then, to quote a popular book title, *Do It!* Stop swearing, or gossiping, or drinking too much, or whatever the Lord helps you see needs to be changed about yourself. Get up, get out, and get interested in helping others.

Bored now that you’ve retired? Teach others to read. Miss the children now that you are an empty nester? Become a foster grandparent. Tired of planning meals? Serve once a month in a soup kitchen. Lonely? Visit shut-ins. Some of Jesus’ disciples live today. Let one of them be you.

1 Samuel 21:1-15; Psalm 31; Acts 13:13-25

ANGLICAN CYCLE The Most Revd Dr Winston Halapua Bishop of Polynesia and Primate and Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia; Polynesia - Vanua Levu and Taveuni - (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia) The Rt Revd Apimeleki Nadoki Qiliho; Polynesia - Viti Levu West The Rt Revd Apimeleki Qiliho

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Rev. Carl R. Bloom, Mesa, AZ, Ordination to the Priesthood; Birthday of Ann, wife of the Rt. Rev. Donald M. Hultstrand, Greenville, SC.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for those working with our children and youth.

Saturday, July 18

Psalm 30 *Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. (vv.4-5a)*

We often get busy and forget to thank God for the blessings in our lives.

One of the innovations of the Oprah Winfrey Show on television is to encourage her viewers to give thanks daily. Quoting Sarah von Breathnach's *Simple Abundance*, Oprah tells her audience to give thanks for at least five things a day.

We show God how much we appreciate Him and all He does for us by our thankfulness. God likes to hear our thanksgiving, and He really likes to see us lead thankful lives. While it is important to be thankful to God, it is also important to show others our thankfulness. We can do this by calling a loved one we haven't spoken to for awhile, writing a letter to someone we are thankful for, giving our time and money to a church or charity, or creating beauty in the world by smiling at everyone we meet.

One very effective way of keeping ourselves mindful of our thankfulness is to keep a daily journal of the things we are blessed with by God. Once we start giving thanks for our blessings, we realize how many of them we have and how truly thankful we should be.

1 Samuel 22:1-23; Psalm 32; Acts 13:26-43; Mark 3:19b-35

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Popondota - (Papua New Guinea) The Rt Revd Lindsley Ihove

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Almighty God, make us gentle and courteous in word and deed.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Doug Dyson.

by Sallie Hazen

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