

*Good News Daily*

**Volume XV**

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**Number 47**

**Sunday, November 22**

Romans 15:5-13 *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.* (v.7 NIV)

I watched her walk into Women's Bible Study tall and confident. Head held high, she refused help as only one blind from birth can. "Just *tell* me which way to walk." Visiting, but known by many, she soon joined in the discussion and asked for prayers for a place to stay for a couple days. The Spirit tugged at my heart. How can I say no to the Holy Spirit? With apprehension I invited this stranger to stay in my home. What would she expect of me? This was unknown territory.

Our friendship was instantaneous and I soon forgot about her disability as we settled in for the evening. "I always wanted to see this movie," she said as I placed the DVD into the player. I marveled at her ability to use senses I take for granted to *see* the movie in her own way.

The Lord said to take people into your home and hearts, share meals and activities, accept one another. "My new best friend," she calls me. I call her *God's gift*.

Isaiah 19:19-25; Psalm 118; Luke 19:11-27

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Wangaratta - (Victoria, Australia) The Rt Revd John Parkes

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Robinson, The Very Rev. Ann Tofani, Vicar; Nkulusi Parish, Rev. Andrea Anania, Vicar; The mission of Tariachi, Santissima Cruz De Maravillas, Peru Rev'd Luis Vizcarra; Thomas W. Langford, Springfield, Ordination to the Diaconate; Birthday of The Rev. Canon Timothy J. Hallett, Bloomington, IN.

ST. MATTHEW'S: For Fr. Bruce and Sylvia DeGooyer as they transition in retirement from active ministry at St. Matthew's and the Diocese of Springfield, and as they prepare to relocate.

**Monday, November 23**

1 Peter 1:1-12 *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.* (vv.8-9)

I cannot see them, but I've come to believe there are two things I can depend on each day; the birds will share their songs of joy before daybreak, and the love of God surrounds me. Many mornings I arise early. The aroma of coffee accompanies me as I head toward the backyard. An owl hoots in the distance, a lone cardinal begins its wakeup call and soon another joins the song. Before long a woodpecker will begin its tap tapping. I hear them, but I can't see them.

I begin my morning prayers to God. I cannot see Him but I know He's there. Soon, all is well with my soul.

In John 20:29, Jesus told his disciple, Thomas, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." We're blessed because we believe what we cannot see. God's covenant of love allows us to rest in joy and hope during times of trouble. No matter our trial, nothing can harm our soul if we've accepted Christ's gift of salvation.

Joel 3:1-2, 9-17; Psalm 106:1-18; Matthew 19:1-12

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Warri - (Bendel, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Christian Ezezi Ideh

DIOCESAN CYCLE: We give you thanks, O God, that you have made us in your own image and redeemed us through Christ Jesus your Son.

ST. MATTHEW'S: For those committed to, or considering, the parish mission trip.

## **Tuesday, November 24**

Psalm 121 *I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.* (vv.1-2)

I now read the *Songs of Ascents*, sometimes called *Pilgrim Psalms*, in a different light. They remind me of my own life journey. The Israelites traveled from distant lands through hostile territory to the temple in Jerusalem for the annual feasts. Each *Pilgrim Psalm* tells stories of how they relied on God throughout their hardships and trials. They counted on God's mercy for protection as they traveled. They knew where they were headed—to worship the Lord.

I began my journey by hollering at the top of my lungs, unaware of my destination. My trust and faith in God would come slowly over many years. I would tread through a different type of hostile territory toward my ultimate goal, always asking, "Why must it be so hard?" Eventually, I would lift up my eyes and know *my help comes from the Lord*.

So, on this date I clutch the good memories to my heart and give thanks for God's mercy and grace as I journey forward.

Nahum 1:1-13; Psalms 120, 122, 123; 1 Peter 1:13-25; Matthew 19:13-22

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Washington - (III, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Mariann Edgar Budde.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Ann and Bob Alley, Champaign.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Grace Johns.

## **Wednesday, November 25**

1 Peter 2:1-10 *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.* (vv.2-3)

I've never read the Bible cover-to-cover as many of my friends boast. My spiritual appetite shows increase and surely my maturity in the Lord abounds. The numerous Bible studies I've attended allow me to skip gleefully from one amazing story to another, yet I've never read Genesis *through* Revelation. It's not that I haven't found nourishment in God's Word, just not *all* of it.

I start over at the beginning, vowing to add extra time to my morning devotionals. With the knowledge that God's Word cannot lie, I strive for an open mind to learn and trust in the Spirit for guidance. But wait, once more I find myself bogged down with long lists of descendants and unpronounceable names. I skim through chapters receiving nothing to my open mind. I wonder if this counts in my quest to read the *entire* Bible.

I did discover if I read every other line in Psalm 119:169-171, it reads: *...give me understanding according to your word...deliver me according to your promise...teach me your decrees....*

He gives the words I need for growth.

Obadiah 15-21; Psalm 119:145-176; Matthew 19:23-30

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Wau - (Sudan) The Rt Revd Moses Deng Bol  
DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Donald H. Langlois, Chandler, AZ  
ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Jim Messer.

### **Thursday, November 26**

Matthew 20:1-16 *"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."* (v.16)

As I picture scenes from childhood (1940's), I'm assured that Thanksgiving will always remain my favorite holiday. The laughter made it special where grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins gathered. My cousin Freddie and I shared the same birthday, which fell on or around Thanksgiving. I believed this day was for us. It was our birthday and before the evening ended coins were tossed in a hat as it passed around the room. We counted the few pennies and nickels while surrounded by cousins. No gifts were given, no lavish theme party where parents compete to outdo each other. It wasn't expected.

From an early age I was thankful for the smallest things—one thin dime taped inside a card caused me to jump with joy. Dandelions picked from a field made me giggle as I held them beneath my nose. To this day, it's the little things—breezes blowing through the trees, and text messages from grandkids. I'm thankful for what I have. Whether I'm first or last in His harvest, I give thanks for God's grace.

Zephaniah 3:1-13; Psalms 131, 132, 133; 1 Peter 2:11-25

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Wellington - (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia) The Rt Revd Justin Duckworth  
DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, grant us the fullness of your grace, that we may obtain your promises and become partakers of your heavenly kingdom.  
ST. MATTHEW'S: Thanksgiving for the many blessings we have received at God's hand.

### **Friday, November 27**

1 Peter 3:13—4:6 *Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed.* (vv.13-14)

Suffering—none of us wants to suffer. We go to great lengths to avoid pain in our lives. We view the suffering of the world through the eyes of the media. However, many attempt to alleviate world suffering.

Peter's words say we should *prepare* ourselves to suffer, if necessary, while doing God's will. This leads me to ask whether have I ever suffered while doing God's will. In answer, I revert to my mission journal of 2004—the Rio Negro River in Brazil, where small villages nestle in the jungle. I tolerated the cramped cabin, cold river water showers, and smelly bathroom, but by day six I began to ask myself if the pain and suffering over-shadowed my desire to go on mission trips. Constant heat, sweat, and red mud tracked into cabins aboard our medical boat added to my mood changing as quickly as a barometer. My temper was short, my tongue sharper. I asked God to adjust my attitude and despite being struck by the "Amazon Revenge," I was thankful for doctors on board.

God's blessings outweighed my suffering. I would return—*prepared*.

Isaiah 24:14-23; Psalms 140, 142; Matthew 20:17-28

ANGLICAN CYCLE: West Ankole - (Uganda) The Rt Revd Yona Katoneene.  
DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Janet, wife of The Rev. Eugene A. Stormer, Springfield

ST. MATTHEW'S: For those who follow in the Way of the Cross, dying to themselves so that others might live.

**Saturday, November 28**

1 Peter 4:7-19 *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.* (vv.10-11)

I knocked on Katherine's door in the assisted living home where several friends reside. Finding her disheveled and still in bed, I silently wondered if she had gone to breakfast.

The despair in her voice and downcast look concerned me. "There's nothing to do," she said and, as usual, I voiced my opinion. "Look around you. You have the perfect opportunity to show God's love."

"Waiting for God," she responded. "All of us are just waiting for God."

She confided how she smiles and tries to be friendly with everyone, but she overheard someone say her smile was phony. And now she was apprehensive about an upcoming *Hymn Sing* she was asked to play the piano for. Afraid she wouldn't remember the notes without music, I encouraged her with words I knew to be true. "You're not too old to use the gift God gave you. Use it for God's glory. He'll be beside you."

My attendance, as well as her granddaughter and great granddaughter, lent moral support; God gave her the courage to share her gift with others.

Micah 7:11-20; Psalms 137, 144; Matthew 20:29-34

ANGLICAN CYCLE: West Buganda - (Uganda) Vacant

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Ann L. Alley, Champaign and The Very Rev. Andrew S. Hook, Springfield.

ST. MATTHEW'S: That we might observe a Holy Advent.

*by Shirley J. Conley*

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