

Good News Daily

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Sunday, October 22

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 “*Yet know this, the kingdom of God has come near.*” (v.11b NRSV)

As I write this, we are still trying to recover from one of the largest mass killings in American history. The internet is full of desperate, tear stained faces in the night. I feel empty, helpless and lost. “Where,” I mutter, “is the kingdom of God tonight?” Slowly...over time...I find it in the healing touch of a crucified God: a nobody executed as a terrorist. Not a God appearing on heavenly clouds ready to destroy God’s enemies, but rather, in the resurrected Christ feeding friends breakfast in the backwaters of the Roman Empire. It is this God that saves me from despair, *not* the powerful, military Messiah that many have been expecting to return throughout history. This seemingly powerless God suffers with me and, by so doing, opens the door for me to live each moment into everlasting life. No wonder I was *still* waiting for the kingdom: my view and Jesus’ demonstration of God’s kingdom were not the same. Did Jesus get it right? I will bet my life on it.

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14; Psalms 148, 149, 150; Acts 16:6-15

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for Temotu - (Melanesia) The Rt Revd Leonard Dawea

DIOCESAN CYCLE: All Saints Episcopal Church, Morton, The Rev. Matthew C. Dallman, Priest in Charge; Goweko Mission, Tanzania, Rev. Tiyishime Amon, Vicar; Mission of St. Luke, District of Cerro Colorado, Arequipa, Peru, Rev'd Ricardo Vergara, Vicar.

Monday, October 23

Psalms 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)

I sit in the balcony soaked in the blackness of a moonless night. I can barely see my hands. Eight stories beneath me, the ocean murmurs as it unfolds endlessly onto the sandy shore. A breeze murmurs in my ear and sends a chill down my neck. I shrug into the prickly warmth of my woolen sweater. I breathe slowly...deeply...intentionally. The cool air caresses its way into my lungs. I relax into stillness. The internal dialogue is muted. Desire becomes irrelevant. I wait in simple silence. The first hint of orange seeps out of the purple horizon. Like the brush of a butterfly’s wing, joy caresses my soul. An “Is-ness” emerges out of an

unspectacular union with reality itself. I experience salvation: an invitation to live into a Divine Love that transcends consequences. An invitation offered by a Presence that is relational and seeks me. Not a free ticket out of the painful vagaries of life; but rather, an invitation to Love.

Jeremiah 44:1-14; 1 Corinthians 15:30-41; Matthew 11:16-24

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Terekeka - (Loryko, Sudan) The Rt Revd Paul Modi

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Strengthen the faith of us who believe in you, O Lord, and sow the seed of faith into the hearts of those who do not believe in you, O Lord.

Tuesday, October 24

Matthew 11:25-30 *Come to me, all you that are weary...and you will find rest for your souls.* (vv.28a, 29b)

A half century later, I can still see the rejection letter in my hand. I can feel the dryness in my throat. With a few, well-crafted sentences, it politely shuts the door to the dream that has defined me. How will I bear the humiliation when everyone knows? Will they see me as a failure...as a fraud? How about the one I love the most? Will the wedding still be on? I can't bring myself to tell her. I default into living with a ticking time bomb. The longer I wait, the worse it becomes. I turn to alcohol; but, being on a college campus, that signal is lost on all. Finally, I tell her. I can see that she is deeply hurt. She tears up...for *me*...a stream in the dessert of my affliction...rest for my weary soul. At times, life rips a hole in our dreams, and then slowly grinds us to our knees. At such times, rest within sorrow is a rare and precious gift.

Lamentations 1:1-12; Psalms 26, 28; 1 Corinthians 15:41-50

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Texas - (Province VII, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Andrew Doyle,

The Rt Revd Jeff Fisher, Bishop Suffragan, The Rt Revd Dena Harrison, Bishop Suffragan;

West Texas - (Province VII, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Gary Lillibridge, The Rt Revd David Reed, Bishop Suffragan

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Laurie R. Kellington, The Villages, FL.
ST. MATTHEW'S: Adrienne Ives' birthday.

Wednesday, October 25

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 *But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* (v.57)

The phone rings. "It's happening. The doctor says forty-eight hours...max." The next morning, I am standing at my brother's bedside. He lays unconscious. His breathing sounds shallow...labored. His hands feel clammy...stiff. His face looks ashen. His discomfort increases. His son gently squeezes another eyedropper full

of peace under his tongue. I am surprised I feel so numb. It's like I am disconnected to what is going on. The wasting body on the bed was so beautiful and powerful when young. "This is Eddy. He is *dying!*" I remind myself as my brother's life fades like twilight sinking into night's embrace. Is there anything as threatening as death? Will it be the end of all I have been...an uncontrollable descent into the most dangerous situation I have ever lived? Will life be stronger than death? I experience the answer in the unfathomable peace that overwhelms me as Eddy's left hand lays in mine and he rattles his last breath: in Christ, *both* life *and* death are precious gifts. Hallelujah!

Lamentations 2:8-15; Psalm 38; Matthew 12:1-14

ANGLICAN CYCLE: The Arctic - (Rupert's Land, Canada) The Rt Revd David Parsons, The Rt Revd Darren McCartney, Bishop Suffragan

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Michael J. and Karen Newago, Havana

Thursday, October 26

Psalm 37:1-18 *Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him (v.7a)*

The wind howls. I struggle up the trail. It must be 10 below. At 12,400 feet, I gasp for air. Grey clouds threaten. It feels like slow suffocation. "No," I remind myself, "It isn't...really. Relax, concentrate on the breathing." Finally, I'm on the ridge! My heart pounds its complaint against my chest. My helmet fills with the sounds of heavy breathing. Like life, Whale's Tail Ridge lies majestically before me: threatening and glorious. I "slip and slide" my way down the icy ridge to the cornice. My ski tips peer over the steep embankment. It's like jumping off a ten-foot wall! My gut tightens. I *really* regret being here! Hundreds of runs, and more than my fair share of scary falls, have taught me that keeping my vision up while patiently waiting for the skis to carve my turns is the only way off this cliff. So it is with life...and with God. Sometimes, the only thing to do is wait patiently...trusting...with eyes up...for the dance to unfold.

Ezra 1:1-11; 1 Corinthians 16:1-9; Matthew 12:15-21

ANGLICAN CYCLE: The Episcopal Church in South Carolina - (Province IV, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Gladstone Adams

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: Chris Bennett's birthday.

Friday, October 27

1 Corinthians 16:10-24 *Let all that you do be done in love (v.14)*

It is early Saturday morning. The Florida sun is already bright and warm. The weekend snorts impatiently before me like a colt edgy to get out of his stall.

The old man sits quietly beside me, his thick white hair clipped very short. Beautiful blue eyes, distorted behind thick glasses, peer into glaucoma's empty sight. His light brown bamboo cane rests lightly by his side. We spend most Saturdays together since his wife died. When I was young, he seemed like Superman. Then, as time passed, I didn't respect him very much. In fact, he embarrassed me. But now in my forties, with children of my own, I see him in a different light. I see that, like a cowboy and his saddle, we have grown comfortably together through life's many rides. I realize the one thing that I never doubt, the one thing that I take for granted, is that my father loves me. Completely. Unconditionally. All he has done for me...I am convinced...to the best of his ability...he has done in love.

Ezra 3:1-13; Psalm 31; Matthew 12:22-32

ANGLICAN CYCLE: The Murray - (South Australia, Australia) The Rt Revd John Frank Ford

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Canon Martha J. Bradley, Springfield

Saturday, October 28

Psalm 30 *Weeping may linger through the night, but joy comes with the morning.*
(v.5b)

Life, when fed only by the bread of the anxious toil for happiness, is shot through with the poignancy of emptiness. The deepest challenges to my faith have not come from having to believe the unbelievable, but rather, from having to find the courage to live fully through the unbearable dullness of being. Day after day is filled with the relentless pounding of life. The delicious morsels of living become stale crackers on my tongue. Shouts of victory turn into yawns. The future is empty. The only song I can sing is, "Is this all there is to life?" Then...Miracle happens: not so much witnessing the impossible as it is an awakening. I experience a gentle Wonder: the healing Presence that permeates every aspect, of every moment, of my very ordinary life. I experience the "spirituality of imperfection": coming to God in my ingratitude, powerlessness, insecurity, and low self-esteem. The unacceptable is reconciled and thus made whole. Joy dawns out of the night.

Ezra 4:7, 11-24; Psalm 32; Philemon 1-25; Matthew 12:33-42

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Thika - (Kenya) The Rt Revd Julius Njuguna Wanyoike

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

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

by Nestor de Armas

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For the St. Matthew's Community, please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Pray for the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Tim H. and family, Greg P., Linda S., Phyllis P., Bill J., Ron G., Bill, Bobbi, Matt, Tori B.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: Mary, Wendy, Steve

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

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.