

Nudges of the Spirit



Meditations for July 21st to July 27th

Nudges of the Spirit is currently a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell, Sandy Freiburger and Denise Bersos.
This week's selections have been written by Carolyn.

Sunday, July 21st 2 Samuel 7:1-14a or Jeremiah 23:1-6 / Psalm 89:20-37 or Psalm 23 / Ephesians 2:11-22 / Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 (*written by Carolyn*)

Mark 6:31 *He (Jesus) said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.*

When I was younger and working full time with children at home to take care of and an active church life, I would be amazed when I would speak with older women and they would make a comment like, "Oh, I can't possibly attend a committee meeting that day. I'm having my hair done." Given my daily schedule (at the time), I could not imagine having days when the only thing on my calendar was to have my hair done. Now that I'm older and no longer working a secular job, my schedule has slowed down considerably, though as one person put it, "Clergy never fully retire, they just go on the senior circuit." I'm not complaining. I like having time for long walks, kayaking and writing. No matter what our season is in life, the words of Jesus ring true; every now and then we need to intentionally take time to rest – and maybe get our hair done.

Lord, help me to rest in your presence. Amen.

Monday, July 22nd (Mary Magdalene) Judith 9:1, 11-14 / Psalm 42:1-7 / 2 Corinthians 5:14-18 / John 20:11-18 (*written by Carolyn*)

John 20:18 *Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.*

Have you ever had an experience where afterwards you just **had** to tell someone? If so, you can relate to the elation that Mary was feeling after seeing Jesus. Maybe she went to the tomb hoping against hope – after all, Jesus did say He would rise again in three days – and He did raise Lazarus from the dead. Still, actually seeing and talking to Him must have been awesome! About 15 years ago I experienced a healing of a memory that had been dragging me down and, afterwards, I told anyone and everyone who would listen. So, I believe, yes, sometimes we just **have** to tell someone. Have you had a Jesus encounter? If so, I would love to hear about it.

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Amen.

Tuesday, July 23rd Joshua 8:1-22 / Psalm 45 / Romans 14:1-12 / Matthew 26:47-56 (*written by Carolyn*)

Romans 14:1 *Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.*

My mother worked outside of the home five days a week. I recall one Sunday afternoon she was at her sewing machine, a hobby she enjoyed thoroughly. My great-aunt walked by and proceeded to tell her that sewing on Sunday was a sin because it involved work. While some people may consider sewing to be a chore, others find it a wonderful opportunity to express their creativity. Though I don't remember her exact words, I have a feeling my mother's retort to her elder was not one of complete obedience. I'm not sure whose faith would be considered weak here but, for me, the Apostle Paul addresses this kind of situation when he says to not quarrel over disputable matters.

Lord, thank you for the gifts and talents you have given us. Amen.

Wednesday, July 24th Joshua 8:30-35 / Psalm 119:49-72 / Romans 14:13-23 / Matthew 26:57-68 (*written by Carolyn*)

Matthew 26:65 *Then the high priest tore his clothes and said "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"*

To those of us who have been raised as Christians from the time we were small, the words that Jesus spoke just prior to this verse hardly seem like blasphemy. After all, we know Jesus is the Son of Man and that He sits at the right hand of God the Father. However, to the Jews of this time, these would have been revolutionary words. They knew nothing of a Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit. They knew of Adonai in heaven and the Law. They had the Torah and the writings of great Rabbis of the past to guide them. When someone offered an opinion on a matter, his peers would want to know which of the great rabbis he was quoting from. Given that mindset, it's more understandable how the temple religious leaders would be so upset at the words of Jesus. Yet, we can all become so ingrained in our way of thinking that we will miss the Truth standing right in front of us. Is there some truth you are not seeing today?

Lord, open my eyes so that I might see you. Amen.

Thursday, July 25th (St. James) Jeremiah 45:1-5 / Psalm 7:1-10 / Acts 11:27–12:3 / Matthew 20:20-28 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 20:20-21 *Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."*

If James and John were to sit on either side of Jesus in His kingdom, we would consider them as bookends to Him. James was the first of the disciples that was martyred **after Jesus ascended**. John was the last of the disciples to die. Therefore, in a way you could say they functioned as bookends for the ministry of the original disciples in continuing the work that Jesus began; but they left others to continue on. That's the way it has been with the good news of Christ. Each generation has a role to fill in spreading the love of Jesus. It's our turn. How do you think we're doing?

Lord, send your Spirit to guide us. Amen.

Friday, July 26th Joshua 9:22–10:15 / Psalm 40, 54 / Romans 15:14-24 / Matthew 27:1-10 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 27:4 *He (Judas) said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they (the chief priest and elders) said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself."*

This is not the kind of pastoral care any of us would need if we were seeking forgiveness for something we had done terribly wrong. Let's say, for example, you ran a red light which resulted in an accident in which someone was killed. You then called your priest/rector/pastor and after explaining what had happened you were told, "This isn't any of my business, you're on your own." Even if you were acquitted of any wrongdoing by the courts, you probably would not go anywhere near your clergy person again. In fact, you might even decide to be mad at God. There are a couple of things to keep in mind: 1. This is not an excuse but fact: our clergy are human beings who are not immune to making insensitive blunders, but more importantly, 2. Jesus does not abandon us. While we may still have to face the legal punishment of our actions, Jesus is right next to us even if we spend our days in jail. It is to Him we look to for pastoral love. He is our rock on whom we trust.

Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

Saturday, July 27th Joshua 23:1-16 / Psalm 55 / Romans 15:25-33 / Matthew 27:11-23 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 55:22 *Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.*

This is one of the countless "refrigerator magnet" sayings we find in scripture; and to have this written someplace where we see it often may be helpful. How often do we remember to place our concerns at the feet of Christ? Quite often, we may **say** we give our problems over to the Lord, but do we leave them there? That can be hard, especially when the problem concerns someone close to your heart and you're an "I need to fix this" type person. I picture Jesus trying to pry our fingers loose of whatever it is we say we want to give over to Him. Many times, all we can do is pray; however, that is also the most productive thing we can do.

Lord, help me to give my control over to you. Amen.

