

Good News Daily

August 21-27, 2016

Sunday, August 21

Mark 6:1-6a *Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home."* (v.4 NIV)

Can you ever return to your home town after leaving for an extended period of time? Surely some things will be the same, and some things will have changed for the better or the worse. I can wax and wane about the good old days, but many of those days frankly were not. I may remember things, but over time they have been modified in my mind. We all make choices and our choice to follow Christ as Lord and Savior certainly does not follow the culture of today. We are truly set apart by our beliefs and actions.

How do we look at those we encounter around us? Do they only want a handout or money? Are they hostile because of our beliefs? Are they suffering, or experiencing a personal crisis? How do we radiantly shine forth the love of God to all; especially those that are different from us?

God took on a common life with a less than stellar pedigree, and without exemptions or an ability to "buy his way out" of the experience. In following him we must show love and compassion to those who suffer, who are lonely, who are hungry. God, through Jesus Christ, calls us into a relationship of love, and that is sometimes tough.

Job 4:1-6, 12-21; Psalms 146, 147; Revelation 4:1-11

Birthdays: None

Anniversaries: None

Monday, August 22

John 6:52-59 *"For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink."* (v.55)

My wife is a vegetarian. I am an omnivore, and a joyful bacon-aholic. She marvels at the sparkle in my eye at an "all you can eat" breakfast buffet with a large tray of bacon. We do not see food the same way, but when we sit down to dinner and offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the food, we are in unity in thanks for all of the blessings that God has provided for us.

Eat my flesh and drink my blood. Symbolically or literally was shocking in Jesus' time as it is today. Blood is life. As it is spilled, God's life-giving fluid ebbs to a finality of death, if not checked. Christ's humanity—he took on our lives to redeem us from our sin and our selves. This concept is not about sensationalism or cannibalism, but redemption and everlasting life after death.

When we gather as a community of believers and receive the bread and wine, Christ is there with us. We are gathered with him, angels, archangels, and all of the company of heaven. When we gather as family, or

neighbors, or as a community of believers and we give thanks, he is there also, embracing the vegetarian and the omnivore bacon-aholic, wrapping his arms of love around us all.

Job 4:1, 5:1-11, 17-21, 26-27; Psalms 1, 2, 3; Acts 9:19b-31

Birthdays: Linda Millar and Phillip Norman

Anniversaries: Noel Smith & Beverly Morris-Smith

Tuesday, August 23

John 6:60-71 *From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.* (vv.66-67)

I went out on the front porch the other evening and saw the most magnificent thing: A moth the size of my hands. It had wings with beautiful eyes on them to ward off predators. I immediately wanted to share my excitement with others for I had never seen anything like this before. Three neighbors came up to look, and while we were talking someone I did not know walked by. I asked them if they would like to see something amazing. Without hesitation they said, "No," and missed an opportunity to see a polyphemus moth. My excitement and rejection were both before me. How can we share the good news of the middle? We know of the power, the miracles, the magnificent teachings. We know that many abandoned our Lord and that he was taken, crucified, died, and was buried only to cast off the trappings of death and rise from the dead to take his place at the right hand of the Father. We know of the end, and the good news for all, but how do we share the middle story? The middle is building community, sharing stories and meals. Learning to love one another. We cannot only share the end for it is in the whole story where lies the power.

Job 6:1-4, 8-15, 21; Psalms 4, 6; Acts 9:32-43

Birthdays: Herbert Germaine and Nicole Robbins

Anniversaries: None

Wednesday, August 24

John 7:1-13 *But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders.* (v.13)

I am a creature of habit. I get up at sunrise to make my coffee and my wife's tea. I read the paper, feed the pets, turn on and pause the news, and wander to the computer. If I don't get distracted, I spend time with Sacred Space, to ground me and get the day started in the right mindset. I begin: Dear Lord, help me to be open to You during this time as I put aside the cares of this world. Fill my mind with Your peace, Your love.

It is a matter of the right time or timing. I certainly don't open my email first, for I daily find 128 junk emails offering me lost or hidden treasure and wealth, personal prowess, and longevity. But not one of the 128 offers me hope, or the good news of Jesus Christ. I do not suggest that we become junk mail

scammers for Jesus, but what would happen if every morning each of us took 5 minutes to send one email or text of encouragement in his name? Yearly, a 300 to 600 intentional deluge of peace and love in a world crying out for hope and direction. A world sorely in need of such and, in the Holy Name of Jesus, slowly the world might be transformed. The time is right. Will you join me in this endeavor?

Job 6:1, 7:1-21; Psalm 119:1-24; Acts 10:1-16

Birthdays: Steven Archer, Laura Benson, Daphne Campbell, Beulah Francis, Katrina Rose and Raymond Wagner

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, August 25

John 7:14-36 *Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me."* (v.16)

I have a dear friend who recently lost her husband of more than 70 years. He was a mentor to me, a servant of Christ that lead by example. She was devoted to her husband and lives now in God's presence, listening to the whisper of his words to her—words of comfort, and words of action. She will call me and say, "Tell the leaders and staff to pray and fast for the next 7 days" and I listen. I relay the message without question, for the Holy Spirit works through her mightily. I do not question her authority for she is Christ's servant. She has taught me not to talk all of the time in prayer with God, but take moments to listen for the whisper of his voice. Here I am Lord; your servant is listening.

Job 8:1-10, 20-22; Psalm 18:1-20; Acts 10:17-33

Birthdays: Andrea Facey and Kim Stokes

Anniversaries: None

Friday, August 26

John 7:37-52 *"Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."* (v.38)

Recently my wife and I traveled through Canada. Rivers were roiling from snowmelt. We saw rushing streams and rivers alive, shaping and transforming the landscape. The sounds, the spray, the majesty and power of God. We did not see very many babbling brooks or meandering streams for respite. This peaceful water lurks, waiting to comfort tired feet, clear and cold on a hot day. Many types of water, but nothing to compare with the water that is life-giving with the promise of life everlasting in relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The Song: Fountains of Living Water

I thirsted in the barren land of sin and shame,

And nothing satisfying there I found;

But to the blessed cross of Christ one day I came,

Where springs of living water did abound.

Job 9:1-15, 32-35; Psalms 16, 17; Acts 10:34-48

Birthdays: Carmen Darien, Marcella Gregory, Leo Mitchell, Elizabeth Rhoden-Sherlock, Beverley Spaulding, Ian Superville, Jr. and Jennifer Tromans

Anniversaries: Michael & Linda Joy and Simeon & Maureen Roach

Saturday, August 27

John 8:12-20 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (v.12)

Picture an entire religion by prophecy that was designed to recognize the Messiah, the Son of God—but they did not. Light and darkness with an infinite number of variances in between. See the majesty of the light of Christ in all of his glory with thousands dressed in white at the foot of him and the Lamb. How would this compare if there were no darkness?

I hear, "Can you come and help me? My father is dying." Drugs, overdose, oxygen cut off, and now a man in a vegetative state. In the midst of this tragedy, a son reaches out and asks God, and me, to intervene. I bring prayer and anointing. At a moment of tragedy, reaching out and starting a dialogue. Will this glimpse of God's radiance change a life? Only God knows, but at least contact and a dialogue have begun.

Job 9:1, 10:1-9, 16-22; Psalms 20, 21; Acts 11:1-18

Birthdays: Beverly Corbin and Emil Perez

Anniversaries: None

by Michael Matheny

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