

# Good News Daily

September 24-30, 2017

## Sunday, September 24

Luke 3:7-18 *John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."* (vv.7-8a NIV)

We are called to something deep within our heart. We are all called to bear fruit. Each does this, God willing, in our own time and our own sense of place with His help through the power of the Holy Spirit.

My wife is the manager of a garden center, and I am frequently over there for this or that. Over the last months I have watched wonderful fruit trees and berry bushes flowering out for Spring, and now there is fruit on the trees and bushes—fruit from plants in a container at the edge of open space next to the parking lot. Each is waiting to be taken and planted in someone's yard, but these gifts of God cannot wait. They still bear fruit.

In my travels to homes and hospitals to visit the sick, the recovering, and the dying, I ask God every day for the heart and wisdom to plant seeds, nurture, and love those in need. Turning it over joyfully to Him to bear fruit.

2 Kings 4:8-37; Psalms 93, 96; Acts 9:10-31

**Birthdays:** Marcia Bonnitto, Danielle Colley, Muriel Freund, Thomas McConnell and Rene Yacinthe Sr

**Anniversaries:** Patricia Mantis

## Monday, September 25

Matthew 5:21-26 *"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."* (vv.23-24)

I never really thought of myself as judgmental in relationships with others. When called to serve Christ in the world, I came to realize that I was, and it wasn't until I pulled the log out of my eye, that I could see in a new way. I do realize that some people are just very hard to love, for whatever reason, and I cannot control that at all. What I can control is my response, and Christ calls me to love all—even the difficult people.

My mother-in-law was a model for me in dealing with those outside of my comfort zone. She would always open her door to anyone because she believed in the Scripture citation in Hebrews about entertaining angels. She believed this literally. Through her witness I came to realize that the difficult ones can be a messenger from God also. Be attentive and listen. God sends out messengers of love for you in many forms. They may be close by and they may be outside the circles you have created.

2 Kings 5:1-19; Psalm 80; 1 Corinthians 4:8-21

**Birthdays:** Sharon Boothe-O'Connor and Chantalle Mair

**Anniversaries:** Evelyn Mair

## Tuesday, September 26

Psalm 78:1-39 *My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.* (v.1)

I am forever amazed at our iWorld. 24/7 we can surf the web for truth, and create content that is visual, audible, or written to share with the entire world. We can send a text and immediately expect a response.

I realize that friends post new photos to Facebook or Instagram, but I still have not seen it. I am taking a rest from the iWorld. Friends sometimes get annoyed when I take an iSabbatical. It is beyond their belief system that I can turn off my devices for an afternoon or an evening—targeted time away from the iWorld to read, study, pray, and listen—waiting patiently and quietly for God's whisper. I *do* believe that we are not the only ones who are supposed to speak, that time in prayer is reciprocal. Sometimes God wants to start a conversation.

2 Kings 5:19-27; 1 Corinthians 5:1-8; Matthew 5:27-37

**Birthdays:** Geraldine Pigeot-Saint Fleur, Shelly-Anne Samuel and Corey Torrence

**Anniversaries:** Edward & Barbara Decker

## Wednesday, September 27

Matthew 5:38-48 *"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."* (vv.44-45)

Jesus wept in Orlando recently. I wept also. Forty-nine lives lost, and the grief from families and friends was palatable. This act in the name of radical Islam still scars my heart. I asked myself, "Where was God in all of this?" I was asked to comfort and console a family of one of the victims in the process of planning his funeral at my church. Prayer, tears, grief and planning amidst a media circus looking for the next big thing and a small group of fundamental "Christian" protesters with signs of hate in their hands. In the midst of tears and stories, food and fellowship, Christ was there and held up in a demonstrative way to remind us that there is power and peace in the resurrection. There is hope, and life beyond this brief, transitory life. Love won, God won, and we are each changed as a result.

2 Kings 6:1-23; Psalm 119:97-120; 1 Corinthians 5:9—6:8

**Birthdays:** Charles Cook and Calvin Thompson

**Anniversaries:** None

## Thursday, September 28

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 *"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."* (v.6)

When I was ordained and placed in my first parish, I could not wait to get to work in God's vineyard. I was asked to go and visit a parishioner in the hospital

recovering from surgery. I was eager to put into practice the things I had learned in four years of schooling, and six months of fieldwork in a parish other than my own. On my very first visit to the hospital, I knocked on the door, entered, and spoke to the person. No response—just a blank stare. I asked several questions, moved closer. No response—just a blank stare. I did not know what to do. I said a brief prayer and walked out into the hall. I will never forget that day, some 12 years ago. The one thing that I failed to do, was take the time to offer a prayer for God's help and wisdom before entering the room. Him not me, me, me. Turns out the patient had extensive brain surgery, and could not talk. God can use each of us in magnificent ways if we just take the time to pray, listen for His call, and get right with His will.

2 Kings 9:1-16; Psalms 83, 146, 147; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

**Birthdays:** Ayesha Maginley, Jorge Sandoval and Luis Vaz

**Anniversaries:** None

### Friday, September 29

Matthew 6:7-15 *"Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."* (v.8)

As my wife and I have reached the age of retirement, weekly we receive solicitations in the mail for free dinners at nice restaurants from various companies offering health care, retirement, and investment solutions. The FREE Dinner at Restaurant X is the prominent type. When I was a child my father and I would go to a local Italian restaurant that had a sign over the bar that said, "Free Spaghetti Tomorrow." It hooked me every time. I realize that there is no such thing as a free lunch, but there is a free offering worthy of consideration. God has given us life, with ears to hear, a mind to perceive, eyes to see, and a heart that points us to the living presence of God before us daily. And the best thing; a free offer of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Not tomorrow, but today, and every day.

2 Kings 9:17-37; Psalm 88; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

**Birthdays:** Alexander Husbands, Christian Norton and Vinnie Versaci

**Anniversaries:** Neville & Evelyn Barlett

### Saturday, September 30

Matthew 6:19-24 *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."* (vv.19-20)

As I age, I realize that I have too much stuff—a widget from a past collection, too precious to throw away and useless to donate. Multiply these items by the years and there are boxes and boxes. As I begin to forget things and where I placed them, these items slowly form a tomb, or at least a barrier in my relationship with God. It is time for release from these items and their "entombment". Such it is with other stuff also—hurts, wounds, and sin.

The ancient church fathers spoke of life coming out of death. Out of Christ's death and sacrifice for us, comes the promise of a new life. Paring down the possessions to a critical few opens a world of possibilities, and space to breathe, stretch, and give thanks for a life born anew in Christ.

If you are having trouble recognizing Jesus' real presence at this point in your life, there may be a real benefit in drawing from your memory; remembering moments in your life and see that they were a gift from a loving God who can guide you down the path of life into a new life in Him.

2 Kings 11:1-20a; Psalms 87, 90; 1 Corinthians 7:10-24

**Birthdays:** Hazel Chen, Norma Tate, Selvyn A Thomas and Johane Vilsaint

**Anniversaries:** Mr. & Mrs. David Williams II

*by Michael Matheny*

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