

*Good News Daily*  
*The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd*

**Volume XII**

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**Number 1**

**Sunday, January 1**

John 16:23b-30 *“Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”* (vv.23b-24 NIV)

Today is the day for making New Year’s resolutions. It is a time when we try to commit ourselves to some sort of change that we know would be beneficial, but have usually failed to accomplish before. That’s why many of us seem to make the same resolution almost every year: “I’m going to get more exercise,” or “I’m going to start on that diet and really stick to it this year,” or “I’m going to kick that habit once and for all.” We may start out with enthusiasm, but after a short time we find that our nature has gotten the best of us and we have come up short yet again. We don’t have the strength by ourselves; at least, I know I don’t.

In today’s reading, Jesus reminds us that we don’t have to rely on ourselves and fail. Prayer is the missing ingredient. The single most important resolution we should make today is to begin a life committed to prayer. We don’t have to rely on our own strength; God will provide His. Making a resolution to pray first is the only way to succeed with all the others.

Isaiah 62:1-5, 10-12; Psalm 103; Colossians 2:6-12

***Include in your prayers:*** Krystal Pierce, Carol Block, Lori Zenobia, Tony Montgomery, Louise, Frank LePore, Jack P., Michelle and family, Sheila Gimbel, Diane Spero, Mary Ann Pfohl, James Baur, Peter Swistock, Chad Ring family, Charlotte Calahan, Helen Church, Maggie Cripps, Bobby, Betty Anne Schlegel, Dave Dimon, Lillian Lewis, Norma Pumphrey, Barbara Phillips, Biby DaVila, Norman Hinman, Jackie Schmidbauer, Nancy Olssen, George, Melissa, Sally, Dick & Tom Shea, Rachel, Amanda Smith, Tim Grimes, Seth Mark Madison, John Reynolds, Wendy Williams, M.J. Dutchess

**Monday, January 2**

1 Kings 19:1-8 *Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.” Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.* (vv.1-3a)

Elijah had every reason to fear for his life. Jezebel was definitely a major threat; her main goal seems to have been killing off all of the prophets of the Lord. Elijah was so afraid of her death threat that he “ran for his life.” In the end, Elijah never even experienced an earthly death at all; the Lord simply took him up to heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11).

One of the most striking things I came to realize after I gave my life to the Lord was that I had truly lost my fear of death. I no longer see death as the end of my journey; it is just something that is going to happen along the way. I almost look forward to it, in a way, because afterwards my life will be so much better.

We no longer have to fear death. Jesus already died for us so we don’t have to. Now we can live with him forever.

Psalm 34; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:1-14

**Include in your prayers:** Ken, Nico Clothier, Adele Herbert, Suzanne Turner, Patricia McMahon, Nancy Donovan, Bob Schollmeyer, Genevieve Flynn, Larry Bischoff, Kaye Bischoff, Rusty Miller, Matthew Ruppell, Sarah Lawler, Ann F., Diane, Teresa Sarcia, Herb Fleck, Duchon Family, Terri and Diane, Irene Habernickle, Carrie Moon, Barbara Jones, Claudia Kronenberg, Beverly Habig, Wally Bates, Dianna Nuquist, Pat Douglas, Priscilla Fisher, Vicki McFale, Kendall Grashof, Jerry Karlan, Erica, Eric Mac

### **Tuesday, January 3**

Ephesians 4:17-32 *“In your anger do not sin”*: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. (v.26)

One of the commonly heard bits of advice to newlyweds is to never go to bed without resolving your differences. I will admit that there have been times when I remembered this advice while waiting to fall asleep—and was *still* too stubborn to offer an apology. Upon awaking, I would sometimes be even angrier than the night before, creating a larger barrier to making amends.

In today’s reading, Paul explains that letting the sun go down while we are still angry gives the devil a foothold. The next time I’m laying in bed angry I want to picture *that* in my mind for motivation to swallow my pride and make up.

1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 68; John 6:15-27

**Include in your prayers:** Robert Hutton, Debbie, Emily Block, Rhiannon, Margaret Martin, Nancy, Lori Norris, Priscilla, Amy, John Murdock, Gordon, Elizabeth Perry, Maggie, Gerald Orban, Roderick Buller, Joan S. Schmidt, Tom Kroll, Petey, John Gepfert, Ida, Jack Burdensiek, Casey Lee Gibbons, Earl and Diane Seely, Marino family, William Kelly, Anita Scarpa, Diane Manuel, Edgar Lail, Tom Pariseleti, Hallie Mylotte, Pat Cohen, Peter Hollis, Rose and Sam, John Christopher Garabrant, Arline Henderson, Karin Armbruster, William Newman, Patty Wagner, Diane McQuillen, Gina Alexander, Don Pampena, Thelma McHale

### **Wednesday, January 4**

Joshua 3:14—4:7 *The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.* (v.17)

Everyone can recall times in his or her life when it was evident that the Lord was actively involved in shaping the outcome. Opportunities appear out of nowhere or paths that seem open are suddenly closed and no longer viable. Many refer to these as “a God thing” because it is obvious that circumstances are being maneuvered by forces beyond our comprehension. It is sometimes difficult to see until much later, when we look back on something and realize that God’s hand was there.

Think about how you met your spouse, for instance. I can see now how God picked my wife for me. He knew that the person I thought was perfect for me was in no way so! One path closed, another opened. He could see the big picture, where I could not. God really does know what we need so much more than we do. My wonderful wife is the perfect example!

Psalms 85, 87; Ephesians 5:1-20; John 9:1-12, 35-38

**Include in your prayers:** Jason Bolton, Leslie Hahn, Patty Hart, Richard Downing, Emmy Smith, Marilyn, Marie Oberacker, Dee Hanson, Jim Freese, Frank Alneida, Amy Kuryla, Lance Block, Jim Krainski, Brooke Waton, Jeanne Wilhelm, Jack McKenna, Valentine Houyvet, George Kinard, Joe

D'Alessandro, Walter L., Bucky Gelser, Katie Kish, J.D. Butler, Tina S.C., Joanne, Daryl Stogryn, Rowena Renn-Hicks, Ader Family, Katie Nehls, Grandma Jean, Verna Tulla, Russell Remington, Tamra Webster, O'Toole family, Thomas Downing, Devon Quigley, Mark Currin, Mary, John Hollenberg, the Reardon family, Bob Nilsen, Joe Lopez, Claire and Tim Wilson, Megen Moran, the Hoey family, Sean Ernst

### **Thursday, January 5**

John 11:17-27, 38-44 *When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." (vv.43-44)*

Lazarus was one of Jesus' good friends and Jesus was very upset over Lazarus' death, so he thanked his Father for hearing him and raised Lazarus from death. This is something we can all relate to. If we could, we, too, would raise our loved ones from death because we care for them so deeply.

When we ask Jesus to be our personal savior, he becomes our good friend too; and he has promised to raise us from death as well. And, by leading our loved ones to Christ, we, indirectly, have a hand in saving them from death too!

As we read Jesus' words in today's passage, we realize that Jesus did not just say those words once, years ago, when his friend Lazarus died. Jesus says those words every time someone new becomes his friend: "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

Jonah 2:2-9; Psalms 2, 110; Ephesians 6:10-20

***Include in your prayers:*** Alex, Elizabeth Johnston, Gary and Cindy Hogan, Linnea, Evelyn Corell, David Bradford, Helen Pace, Ruth Dans, Debbie Rannie, Peg Beasley, Norma Millar, Grace, E.J., Elise, Jim Riley, Gail Godek, Mike Rossi, Marie Pelikan, John Schmidt, Julia and Dale, Marvin Branscomb, Ryan Miller, Maurice Porter, Don and Shirley Themm, Bud Wakefield, Norma Egginson family, Chris and Kathy Nolte, Tom LeFevre, Zachary Aaron, Carol Jones, Rose Valentine, Joseph Murphy, Lydon family, Deedle and Jena Sandefer, Manuel family, Ashley, Rosemary Desmond, Devan Quigley, Hilary Montgomery

### **Friday, January 6**

Psalms 46 *He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. (vv.10-11)*

Do you ever simply sit and "be still" before our Lord, knowing that He is God? In his book, *No Man is an Island*, Thomas Merton wrote, "Action is charity looking outward to other men, and contemplation is charity drawn inward to its own divine source. Action is the stream, and contemplation is the spring. The spring remains more important than the stream, for the only thing that really matters is for love to spring up inexhaustively from the infinite abyss of Christ and of God."

Contemplative prayer—also known as centering prayer, the prayer of silence, or practicing the presence of God—is to simply "be" in God's presence in communion with Him. Sitting in silence at His feet, we are not praising, thanking, confessing, intercessing, or petitioning. We are not attempting to communicate at all. We are merely basking in the light of God—letting His love "spring up" and experiencing "charity drawn inward."

There are many techniques people use to enter into contemplative prayer and, while simple, they are not always easy to accomplish. Most people find it difficult to distance themselves from all of life's concerns and distractions, but with practice can become more and more adept at focusing on God and remaining so for longer periods of time. Methods often involve the soft repetition of a single word or short sentence focusing on one of God's attributes. It can be a simple prayer as well. The idea is to rest our minds on this truth as a means of focusing on God. If distractions creep in, the gentle repetition of the truth is used to re-focus again.

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 97; Revelation 21:22-27; Matthew 12:14-21

***Include in your prayers:*** Lillian Sroaka, Julia Dillon, Melissa, Shirley Connell, Abigail, Rose Kyle and family, Mark Warburton, Elizabeth Dunn, George Dzama III, People of Haiti, Sara Sharpless, Jenny Sharpless, Society of St. Margaret, Sue Morie, Zack P., M.J. Becker, Gary Carter, Joe Hall, Point Bates, Toni and Joe Zedrosser, Peter S., Edward Hutton, Richard Farraro, McClain-Huslage family, Stephanie and Mary Kristen, Richard Yandow, Ava Schmidt, Lisa Roznick, Rick Schmitt, Bob Wallace, Neal Bardin, Jr., Lori Z.

### **Saturday, January 7**

Deuteronomy 8:1-3 *He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.* (v.3)

Many Christians can relate to the experience that the Israelites went through before God brought them into the Promised Land. I certainly know that it describes my own experience.

Because of our pride and self-reliance, we try to do things our way and without any help. We try and try to find inner peace and joy through our own power, thinking we are capable of achieving our goals in our own strength and wisdom. But things just don't seem to work out the way we are trying to make them happen; our attempts always seem to fall short and we end up being humbled. It is, many times, when we are at this low point in our life that we realize we cannot do it on our own.

When we are ready, the Lord begins to work on us, drawing us to Him. It is when we are hungry that God begins to feed us and teach us to rely on Him instead of ourselves. That's when we learn that we need more than bread. What we really need is every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord!

Psalm 103; Colossians 1:1-14; John 6:30-33, 48-51

***Include in your prayers:*** our country: for wisdom and guidance for our leaders and the leaders of all nations: for our armed forces, especially those now in combat: including: Dean Joseph Parker, Sgt. Steven Hallaway, Carl Grebe, Robert Stillman, Vincent Marcano, Joey Lail, Daniel DeLapiña, David Stegman, James Post, Harold Fitch IV, Gregory Campbell. Pray for our enemies; for peace, justice and reconciliation in all places where there is conflict, especially among the peoples of the Middle East. Please pray for Todd and Patsy McGregor and the people of Madagascar.

***by Trip Tucker***

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